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THE WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON

VOL. VII.

1778–1779

Of this Letter-press Edition
750 Copies have been Printed for Sale

No. 73

G. P. Putnam's Sons

August, 1890

THE WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON

COLLECTED AND EDITED

BY

WORTHINGTON CHAUNCEY FORD

VOL. VII.

1778–1779

NEW YORK AND LONDON
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
The Knickerbocker Press
1890

Grad. 4
Vignaud Lib.
2-26-1925

Press of
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
New York

Grad. 4
E
302
.W318
A2
1889

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THE WRITINGS OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, VALLEY FORGE, 1 May, 1778.

I have had the honor to receive your despatches of the 27th Instant.

In compliance with the request of Congress, I shall immediately call upon the officers in the army to take the oath of allegiance and abjuration. This I should have done as soon as the resolution passed, had it not been for the state of the army at that time, and that there were some strong reasons, which made it expedient to defer the matter. My opinion upon the subject of a future provision for the officers hath been so fully, and I trust so necessarily and equitably urged, that I shall not add further respecting it, except my sincere wishes that the establishment was determined on. Nothing in my idea can be more just and I am certain there is nothing more essential. The present unsettled state of the army is hurtful in the extreme.

Since my letter of the 27th, I have received authentic information of the sailing of a very large number of transports from Philadelphia; two hundred, it is said. They went down the Delaware the begin-

ning of the week, light and empty. I have not been able to learn any thing of their destination; nor can I form a conjecture upon the occasion, that is the least satisfactory.

With infinite pleasure I beg leave to congratulate Congress on the very important and interesting advices brought by the frigate *Sensible*. General McDougall and Mr. Deane were so obliging as to transmit me the outlines of the good tidings.[1] As soon as Congress may think it expedient, I shall be happy to have an opportunity of announcing to the army, with the usual ceremony, such parts of the intelligence as may be proper, and sanctified by authority. I have mentioned the matter to such officers as I have seen; and I believe no event was ever received with a more heart-felt joy. I have the honor to be, &c.

P.S.—Just as I had finished my letter above, I received the honor of your favor of the 28th with the

[1] Simeon Deane, brother to Silas Deane one of the American Commissioners in Paris, was the bearer of the despatches containing the treaties between France and the United States. He came over in the French frigate *Sensible*, of thirty-six guns, which was sent by the king for the express purpose, and arrived at Falmouth (now Portland) in Casco Bay, on the 13th of April, after a passage of thirty-five days. He reached Yorktown on Saturday, the 2d of May. Congress had adjourned till Monday, but the members were immediately summoned to assemble by the president, and the despatches were read.

"I return you my thanks for your favor of the 27th ultimo, and heartily congratulate you on the important intelligence contained in it. As the matter is related, in general terms, France appears to have acted with politic generosity towards us, and to have timed her declaration in our favor most admirably for her own interests and the abasing her ancient rival. One immediate good consequence I flatter myself will attend this intelligence, which is, that the States will shake off their languor, and be stimulated to complete their battalions."—*Washington to Major-General McDougall*, 1 May, 1778.

Resolutions & Packets alluded to, I will take measures for dispersing the printed Resolutions.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

HEAD-QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
5 May, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Notwithstanding the immense advantages, which we shall derive from the acknowledgment of our independency by, and our late alliance with the court

[1] Read in Congress, May 4th.

"Last night at eleven o'clock I was honored with your despatches of the 3d. The contents afford me the most sensible pleasure. Mr. Simeon Deane had informed me by a line from Bethlehem, that he was the bearer of the articles of alliance between France and the States. I shall defer celebrating this happy event in a suitable manner, until I have liberty from Congress to announce it publicly. I will only say, that the army are anxious to manifest their joy upon the occasion."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 4 May, 1778.

From the Orderly Book, May 6th,—"It having pleased the Almighty Ruler of the Universe to defend the cause of the United American States, and finally to raise us up a powerful friend among the princes of the earth, to establish our liberty and independency upon a lasting foundation; it becomes us to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the divine goodness, and celebrating the important event, which we owe to his divine interposition. The several brigades are to be assembled for this purpose at nine o'clock to-morrow morning, when their chaplains will communicate the intelligence contained in the Postscript of the Pennsylvania Gazette of the 2d instant, and offer up thanksgiving, and deliver a discourse suitable to the occasion. At half after ten o'clock a cannon will be fired, which is to be a signal for the men to be under arms; the brigade-inspectors will then inspect their dress and arms and form the battalions according to the instructions given them, and announce to the commanding officers of the brigade that the battalions are formed.

"The commanders of brigades will then appoint the field-officers to the battalions, after which each battalion will be ordered to load and ground their arms. At half-past eleven a second cannon will be fired as a signal for the march, upon which the several brigades will begin their march by wheeling to the right by platoons, and proceed by the nearest way to the left of their ground by the new position; this will be pointed out by the brigade-inspector. A third

of France, yet much remains to be done to extricate ourselves entirely from our oppressors. Even taking for granted, that the enemy, from the situation of European affairs, cannot be further reinforced, their remaining strength, if collected and properly directed, is formidable. The Congress, sensible of this, have wisely determined not to relax in their preparations for war, and have earnestly recommended it to every State to complete their quotas of Continental troops, and to hold its militia ready for service.[1] * * *

I had a letter a few days ago from the Board of War, in which they desire to know whether you had ever been able to any thing more towards the exchange between Brigadier-General Thompson and

signal will then be given, on which there will be a discharge of thirteen cannon; after which a running fire of the infantry will begin on the right of Woodford's, and continue throughout the front line; it will then be taken upon the left of the second line and continue to the right. Upon a signal given, the whole army will huzza, *Long live the King of France;* the artillery then begins again and fires thirteen rounds; this will be succeeded by a second general discharge of the musketry in a running fire, and huzza, *Long live the friendly European Powers.* The last discharge of thirteen pieces of artillery will be given, followed by a general running fire, and huzza, *The American States.*"

The following is an extract from a letter, written by an officer who was present. "Last Wednesday was set apart as a day of general rejoicing, when we had a *feu de joie* conducted with the greatest order and regularity. The army made a most brilliant appearance; after which his Excellency dined in public, with all the officers of his army, attended with a band of music. I never was present where there was such unfeigned and perfect joy, as was discovered in every countenance. The entertainment was concluded with a number of patriotic toasts, attended with huzzas. When the General took his leave, there was a universal clap, with loud huzzas, which continued till he had proceeded a quarter of a mile, during which time there were a thousand hats tossed in the air. His Excellency turned round with his retinue, and huzzaed several times." —Valley Forge, May 9th.

[1] There were fears at this time, that the country, confiding in the aid and prowess of France, now pledged to sustain American independence, would remit the necessary exertions for carrying on the war. The favorable result

Brigadier-General Hamilton. If you cannot succeed in that, they desire you to feel the pulse of the two other brigadiers, for either of which we would willingly exchange General Thompson. The foreigners have thought themselves partially treated by General Howe, in regard to exchange, and if you were to propose the matter to the foreign brigadiers, and either of them should incline to it, perhaps General Howe would accede, rather than give umbrage. I am, &c.

P. S. As the balance of officers is much against us in the case of prisoners, and may long remain so, unless we can effect exchanges between ours with the enemy and those of General Burgoyne's army, I must request that you will take occasion to inform the latter, on their application, or indeed without it, that we shall readily consent on our part to their releasement for our officers of the same rank. If there should be any number, who wish this to take place, they had better write at the same time to General Howe, or commanding officer at Philadelphia; and you will send me a list of their rank and names, that a like number, who have been longest in confinement, may be directed in return, if their request is complied with.

of the contest was now considered as beyond a doubt. Even Washington said, in a letter to General Putnam, of the same date as the above: "I hope that the fair, and, I may say *certain* prospects of success will not induce us to relax." Robert Morris also, in a letter to General Washington, thus wrote. "When I congratulate your Excellency on the great good news lately received from France, you will not expect me to express my feelings. Were I in your company, my countenance might show, but my pen cannot describe them. Most sincerely do I give you joy. Our independence is undoubtedly secured; our country must be free."—May 9th.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL McDOUGALL.

HEAD QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
5 May, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have wrote pressingly to General Heath and General Putnam to forward the recruits of Massachusetts and Connecticut to the North River, with all possible despatch. If they arrive there during the continuance of your command, you will be pleased, agreeable to former orders, to send on those belonging to the regiments that are here immediately.

I very much fear that we, taking it for granted, that we have nothing more to do, because France has acknowledged our independency and formed an alliance with us, shall relapse into a state of supineness and perfect security. I think it more than probable, from the situation of affairs in Europe, that the enemy will receive no considerable if any reinforcements. But suppose they should not, their remaining force, if well directed, is far from being contemptible. In the desperate state of British affairs, it is worth a desperate attempt to extricate themselves; and a blow at our main army, if successful, would have a wonderful effect upon the minds of a number of people, still wishing to embrace the present terms, or indeed any terms offered by Great Britain. It behoves us therefore to make ourselves as respectable as possible, that, if the enemy continue in their detached state, we endeavor to destroy them by piecemeal; and if, on the contrary, they collect, they may not fall heavily upon us in some quarter. I cannot help thinking, from a late uncommon move-

ment of their shipping, that they have something of this kind in view. Near two hundred sail of light transports have gone down the Delaware within a week past.[1] New York is too valuable to be evacuated but upon the last extremity, and I therefore incline to think that the move, if any, will be from Rhode Island. If the troops should be brought from thence to New York, we must provide for the posts upon the North River, in proportion to the addition to the strength of the enemy; if to Philadelphia, we must draw down our force accordingly. For these reasons it is my wish to see the eastern recruits brought on towards the North River as quickly as possible. If there should be no alteration in the position of the enemy, you will, as before mentioned,

"The enclosed copy of a letter from General Dickinson to me will inform Congress of the fate of the Continental frigates in Delaware; a fate (in the situation in which they were left) I had long predicted, and which I had taken much pains to avert, by using every argument in my power to have them sunk. In that case, their destruction would have been at least a work of time, difficulty, and expense, and might have been perhaps prevented. About one o'clock on Thursday I got notice of an intended move of the enemy by water; and, conjecturing the destination of it, had a detachment under General Maxwell (whose tour of duty it was) ready to march towards the Delaware by four o'clock: but a heavy rain prevented their moving till next morning."— *Washington to the President of Congress*, 12 May, 1778.

"The late visit of the enemy to Bordentown has fully verified my predictions of what would be the fate of the frigates and other vessels there. As soon as the enemy had got full possession of the river, I urged the gentlemen of the Navy Board to scuttle and sink the frigates immediately. They objected to sinking them at that time, but said, that they would have them ballasted and ready to sink upon the approach of the enemy. I then wrote them, that they might depend the attack would be sudden, so they would find that those, entrusted with the execution of the business, would not be able to effect it, before the enemy had possession of the vessels. The event has proved it. Had hulks of such bulk been sunk, it would have taken a considerable time to have weighed them."— *Washington to Governor Livingston*, 12 May, 1778.

send on those intended for the regiments here without loss of time. If there should be a move, we must alter our plan, according to circumstances. I am, &c.[1]

TO GENERAL SCHUYLER.

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
15 May, 1778.

DEAR SIR:

I have been duly favored with your letters of the 16th and 26th of last month, with their enclosures. I am sorry to observe that the disposition of the Indian Nations is not generally so favorable, as could be wished; but it is not to be wondered at, when we consider the advantages the enemy possess over us, in the means of supplying their wants, and rewarding their friendship. I doubt not Congress, as far as may be practicable, will direct the measures recommended by the Board of Commissioners for cultivating their attachment, to be carried into effect, or any

[1] A council of war was held on the 8th of May, at which were present the Major-Generals Gates, Greene, Stirling, Mifflin, Lafayette, Kalb, Armstrong, and Steuben; and the Brigadiers Knox and Duportail. This council was convened by order of Congress.

The Commander-in-chief first laid before the council the state of the enemy's forces, which were estimated at somewhat more than sixteen thousand men rank and file fit for the field, besides cavalry and artillery. Of these about ten thousand, the flower of the army, were in Philadelphia, four thousand in New York, and two thousand on Rhode Island.

The Continental force amounted to about fifteen thousand, besides horse and artillery. Of these eleven thousand eight hundred were at Valley Forge, comprehending the sick present, and those on command, who might be called into action on an emergency. The detachment at Wilmington consisted of fourteen hundred. On the North River were eighteen hundred. When all the reinforcements were brought in, that it was reasonable to anticipate, the whole army fit for action could not be expected to amount to more than twenty thousand

others that may appear proper, for promoting that end. I hope, that if their minds could be impressed with a conviction of the true state of affairs between France and this country, and of the genuineness of the Treaties lately concluded, it would have a very happy influence,—The Oneidas and Tuscaroras have a particular claim to attention and kindness, for their perseverance and fidelity.

Mr. Toussard, with a party of Indians, arrived in camp yesterday. I learn by him, that Lt. Col. Gouvion was shortly to set out with another party. If he has not yet begun his journey, when this gets to hand, I should wish the party to be stopped; or, if they should be on the way and not far advanced, and it can be done without occasioning disgust, I should be glad they might return home. When my application was made for a body of Indians to go in this army, our prospects were very different from what

men. With this state of the two armies before them, the council were requested to decide what measures it was best to pursue.

After a full and unreserved discussion, it was the unanimous opinion of the council, that the line of conduct most consistent with sound policy, and best suited to promote the interests and safety of the United States, was to remain on the defensive and wait events, and not attempt any offensive operation against the enemy, till circumstances should afford a fairer opportunity of striking a successful blow. As the enemy were strongly fortified by nature, and by artificial works, in all their positions, it would require a greatly superior force to attack them, with any hope of a favorable issue. It was agreed, that to take Philadelphia by storm was impracticable, and that thirty thousand men would be requisite for a blockade. The Continental force could not be so much increased by the militia, even if that description of troops could be relied on for such an enterprise. In short, strong objections were believed to exist against all offensive movements. General Lee, who was not present at the council, signed his name to their written decision. Baron Steuben sat in the council, having been two days before appointed by Congress inspector-general, with the rank and pay of major-general.

they now are. It was expected that the campaign would have been opened by the enemy much earlier than it, in all probability, will, if they do make another campaign in America, which is far from being certain, in the present posture of European affairs. All appearances at this time are opposed to the supposition of any speedy offensive movement on their part; and if they remain on the defensive, protected by their works, there will be very little of that kind of service in which the Indians are capable of being useful. To bring them such a distance, while there is likely to be scarcely any employment suited to their active and desultory genius could answer no valuable purpose, but would be productive of needless expense, and might perhaps have a tendency to put them out of humor. As there seemed too, to be some apprehensions among them for their own security, and rather a reluctance to leave their homes, they will possibly not be displeased to find the call for their services has ceased.

I leave it to your judgment to assign such reasons as you shall deem best calculated for the change and satisfy them. I should think however a good way might be, to inform them, with proper comments, of the Treaties, we have entered into, and that in consequence of them, affairs have taken such a turn, as to make it unnecessary to give them the trouble, at this time of coming to our assistance. That we wish them, for the present, to continue peaceably at home, and only be in readiness to cooperate with us on any future occasion, that may present itself for advancing our mutual interest.

They may be told, that we hope soon to be able to expel our enemies and to give them effectual protection, against all those from whom they themselves have anything to dread. These you will consider merely as hints, and make such use of them as you shall judge expedient.

As I have requested the Marquis to instruct M. Gouvion, with a message from him to them, expressive of ideas similar to those here suggested, he will inclose his letter for M. Gouvion open to you, directing him nevertheless to consult you and make his declarations correspond with yours. With respect to such Indians as may happen to be on their way to us, though under present circumstances I had much rather dispense with their attendance; yet, if you conceive they cannot be sent back without offending them, they must be suffered to proceed.

Congress have not yet sent me their final instructions relative to your trial: so soon as they do, you may depend, I shall immediately give you notice, and transmit, agreeable to your desire, a copy of the charges they exhibit.

You will without doubt have seen such particulars of our new alliance, as have been made public. There is every reason to believe a war has been some time since declared between France and England. The late Philadelphia papers are full of it, one of them contains a message from the Court of France, to that of Britain, announcing the alliance with America, in terms of banter and contempt, that must be more galling, than anything she has ever before experienced. The King pronounces it to be a high and unprovoked

insult. The two houses of parliament re-echo his sentiments and assure him of their most zealous support, in any measures he may find necessary towards resenting the injury. The English ambassador is recalled from France, and the French ambassador from England. Every appearance indicates an instant war. Another Phil. paper of the 13th, among several other articles of a similar complexion, mentions that the Directors of the Bank had waited upon Lord North to know if a war would take place so soon as was expected: to which he replied, it was inevitable. I am, &c.[1]

[1] See the Message and Address in the *Annual Register for the Year 1778*, pp. 290, 291.—Almon's *Remembrancer*, vol. v., p. 119.

"I take pleasure in transmitting a Philadelphia paper of the 9th, which came to hand yesterday evening, containing a message from His Most Christian Majesty to the court of London, in consequence of the treaty between him and these States, and his Britannic Majesty's Address to the Lords and Commons. The message is conceived in terms of irony and derision, more degrading to the pride and dignity of Britain, than any thing she has ever experienced since she has been a nation. It is not an actual declaration of war, but it certainly must produce one."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 12 May, 1778.

"By a paper of the 13th from the same quarter, it is said, 'The directors of the Bank had waited on Lord North, to know whether a war would happen as soon as expected, who answered it was inevitable; that all governors &c had been ordered forthwith to repair to their respective stations in England, Ireland, and elsewhere.' A further paragraph is, 'that a messenger extraordinary had been despatched to Lord Grantham, ambassador at the court of Madrid, instructing him to demand categorically, whether that court meant to aid the French in their present unjustifiable conduct with respect to American disputes, or to preserve the strictest neutrality, with further directions, in case of an evasive answer, to leave the Spanish dominions immediately. It is added, that the declaration of war was only suspended to know the event of the demand.' Matters appear abroad to be in as favorable a train as we could wish, and if we are not free and happy, it will be owing to a want of virtue, prudence, and management among ourselves."—*Washington to Brigadier-General Nelson*, 15 May, 1778.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

CAMP, 17 May, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I received yesterday your favor of the 15th instant, enclosing a paper subscribed by sundry officers of General Woodford's brigade, setting forth the reasons for not taking the oath of abjuration, allegiance, and office; and I thank you much for the cautious delicacy used in communicating the matter to me. As every oath should be a free act of the mind, founded on the conviction of the party of its propriety, I would not wish, in any instance, that there should be the least degree of compulsion exercised; or to interpose my opinion, in order to induce any to make it, of whom it is required. The gentlemen, therefore, who signed the paper, will use their own discretion in the matter, and swear or not swear, as their conscience and feelings dictate.

At the same time, I cannot but consider it as a circumstance of some singularity, that the scruples against the oath should be peculiar to the officers of one brigade, and so very extensive. The oath in itself is not new. It is substantially the same with that required in all governments, and therefore does not imply any indignity; and it is perfectly consistent with the professions, actions, and implied engagements of every officer. The objection, founded on the supposed unsettled rank of the officers, is of no validity, (rank being only mentioned as a further designation of the party swearing;) nor can it be seriously thought, that the oath is either intended, or

can prevent, their being promoted, or their resignations.

The fourth objection, stated by the gentlemen, serves as a *key* to their scruples; and I would willingly persuade myself, that their own reflections will point out to them the impropriety of the whole proceeding, and not suffer them to be betrayed in future into a similar conduct. I regard them all, and cannot but regret, that they were ever engaged in the measure. I am certain they will regret it themselves. Sure I am, they ought. I am, my dear Marquis, your affectionate friend and servant.[1]

[1] General Woodford's brigade consisted of Virginia troops, and was in the division commanded by the Marquis de Lafayette. The oath required by Congress to be taken by every officer was as follows: "I do acknowledge the United States of America to be free, independent, and sovereign States, and declare that the people thereof owe no allegiance or obedience to George the Third, King of Great Britain; and I renounce, refuse, and abjure any allegiance or obedience to him; and I do swear (or affirm) that I will, to the utmost of my power, support, maintain, and defend the said United States against the said King George the Third and his heirs and successors, and his or their abettors, assistants, and adherents, and will serve the said United States in the office, which I now hold, with fidelity, according to the best of my skill and understanding."—*Journals*, February 3d. Twenty-six officers of General Woodford's brigade signed and sent a memorial to the Marquis de Lafayette, stating their reasons against taking the oath in the words following:

"1. The tenor of the oath they in some measure consider an indignity; they will not undertake to determine it unnecessary; an indignity, as it presupposes that some of them have acted contrary to their sentiments; it may be unnecessary, for those officers, who ventured their lives and fortunes in support of American Independence, could have no other reason but the apparent one.

"2. As many officers at present are injured in their rank, and cannot possibly continue in the army exactly in their present situation, they apprehend it would be an impropriety in them to swear to continue in their present posts, as the rank of the juror is to be taken when the oath is administered.

"3. Would not the oath debar an officer from the privilege of resigning, when circumstances might render it indispensably necessary that he should quit the army?

"4. The taking of the oath, while the present establishment continues, most

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

Sir,

The detachment under your command, with which you will immediately march towards the enemy's lines, is designed to answer the following purposes; namely, to be a security to this camp and a cover to the country between the Delaware and the Schuylkill, to interrupt the communication with Philadelphia, to obstruct the incursions of the enemy's parties, and to obtain intelligence of their motions and designs. This last is a matter of very interesting moment, and ought to claim your particular attention. You will endeavor to procure trusty and intelligent spies, who will advise you faithfully of whatever may be passing in the city, and you will without delay communicate to me every piece of material information you obtain.

A variety of concurring accounts make it probable, that the enemy are preparing to evacuate Philadelphia. This is a point, which it is of the utmost importance to ascertain; and, if possible, the place of their future destination. Should you be able to gain certain intelligence of the time of their intended embarkation, so that you may be able to take advantage of it, and fall upon the rear of the enemy in the act of withdrawing, it will be a very desirable event. But this will be a matter of no small difficulty, and will require the greatest caution and prudence in the execution. Any deception or precipitation may be attended with the most disastrous consequences.

You will remember, that your detachment is a very valuable one, and that any accident happening to it would be a very severe blow to this army. You will therefore use every possible precau-

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of the subscribers are of opinion, would lay them under a pointed restraint in endeavoring to procure a change, which the whole army have long, not only most ardently wished for, but conceived absolutely necessary for its preservation; a change, that would put them on an honorable and advantageous footing."

At the request of the officers, these reasons were presented by the Marquis de Lafayette to the Commander-in-chief. It is presumed, that their scruples were satisfied by the above letter, and that they took the oath, since the objections were peculiar to themselves, and not advanced by any other part of the army.

tion for its security, and to guard against a surprise. No attempt should be made, nor any thing risked, without the greatest prospect of success, and with every reasonable advantage on your side. I shall not point out any precise position to you; but shall leave it to your discretion to take such posts occasionally, as shall appear to you best adapted to the purposes of your detachment. In general, I would observe, that a stationary post is unadvisable, as it gives the enemy an opportunity of knowing your situation, and concerting plans successfully against you. In case of any offensive movement against this army, you will keep yourself in such a state as to have an easy communication with it, and at the same time harass the enemy's advance.

Our parties of horse and foot between the rivers are to be under your command, and to form part of your detachment. As great complaints have been made of the disorderly conduct of the parties, which have been sent towards the enemy's lines, it is expected that you will be very attentive in preventing abuses of the like nature, and will inquire how far complaints already made are founded in justice.

Given under my hand, at Head-Quarters, this 18th day of May, 1778.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS, IN CONGRESS.

MY DEAR SIR, VALLEY FORGE, 18 May, 1778.

Your favor of the 15th instant gave me singular pleasure. I thank you for the agreeable intelligence it contains, which, though not equal to my wishes, exceeded my expectations; and is to be lamented only for the delay,[1] as the evils consequent of it will

[1] After long debates the question of half-pay was finally settled by a kind of compromise. It was decided, that all military officers, commissioned by Congress, who should continue in the service during the war, and not hold any office of profit in the States, should be entitled to receive annually after the conclusion of the war one half of their present pay, for the term of *seven years*, provided that no general officer of the artillery, cavalry, or infantry should

soon, as I have often foretold, be manifested in the moving state of the army, if the departments of the quartermaster and commissary will enable us to stir and keep pace with the enemy, who, from every account, are busy in preparing for their departure from Philadelphia; whether for the West Indies, a rendezvous at New York to prepare for their voyage, or for some other expedition, time only can discover. The sooner, however, the regimental regulations and other arrangements are set about, the sooner they will be finished; and for God's sake, my dear Morris, let me recommend it to you to urge the absolute necessity of this measure with all your might.

As the council held at this camp was by order of Congress, and the members constituting it pointed out by them, it was determined, out of respect to that body, to treat the new members with civility. Indeed, the wish of all here, that no private differences should interrupt the harmony, which is so necessary in public councils, had no small share in the amity that appeared. Contrary, I own, to my expectation, the same sentiments, respecting the measures to be pursued, pervaded the whole. Our resolutions of course were unanimous.

receive more than the half-pay of a colonel, and that this gratuity should extend to no officer who should not take an oath of allegiance to the United States, and actually reside within the same. The non-commissioned officers, instead of half-pay, were entitled to receive a specific reward of eighty dollars at the end of the war. To the resolution in this form there were but two dissenting voices, Mr. Lovell of Massachusetts, and Mr. Wolcott of Connecticut. —*Journals*, May 15th. In the plan first reported by the committee to Congress, the half-pay was to continue for life, and to extend to the widows of officers who should be slain. It was also to be transferable under the control of Congress, and the officers were to be again called into service when necessary.

I was not a little surprised to find a certain gentleman, who, some time ago, (when a cloud of darkness hung heavy over us, and our affairs looked gloomy,) was desirous of resigning, now stepping forward in the line of the army. But if he can reconcile such conduct to his own feelings, as an officer and a man of honor, and Congress hath no objection to his leaving his seat in another department, I have nothing personally to oppose to it.[1] Yet I must think, that gentleman's stepping in and out, as the sun happens to beam forth or obscure, is not *quite* the thing, nor *quite* just, with respect to those officers, who take ye bitter with the sweet.

I am told that Conway, (from whom I have received another impertinent letter, dated the 23d ultimo, *demanding* the command of a division of the Continental army,) is, through the medium of his friends, soliciting this command again. Can this be? And, if so, will it be granted?[2]

I am, very sincerely and affectionately, &c.

[1] General Mifflin had resigned his commissions of major-general and quarter-master-general, on the 8th of October. His resignation of the latter office was accepted by Congress, when he was appointed to the Board of War; but the rank and commission of major-general were continued to him, with the proviso, that no pay should be annexed to that office, till a further order of Congress. It seems his views were afterwards changed, and, on the 21st of May, Congress gave him leave to join the army under General Washington.

[2] Conway had sent a petulant letter to Congress, complaining of ill treatment, and asking an acceptance of his resignation; and then he was vexed and mortified that he should be taken at his word. After the Canada expedition had been abandoned, he was ordered to join the army under General McDougall at Fishkill. He was again ordered back to Albany, whereupon he wrote the above-mentioned letter to the President of Congress, from which the following is an extract characteristic of its author.

"If an attack is made in that quarter," said he, "the inhabitants will look

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, VALLEY FORGE, 18 May, 1778.

I have been honored with your two favors of the 11 & 15 Instant, with the several papers alluded to: the former by Monsr. Jemat—the latter by Express yesterday.

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up to me for assistance. I shall not have it in my power to make any opposition, and, though undeservedly, my character must suffer. Therefore, Sir, I expect you will make my resignation acceptable to Congress. I am determined not to expose myself to dishonor, to gratify the envy and malice of my enemies, whoever they may be. I have been boxed about in a most indecent manner. I declined no occasion of serving. I trust I am as able in leading a division as any officer of my rank in the American army. What is the meaning of removing me from the scene of action on the opening of a campaign? I did not deserve this burlesque disgrace, and my honor will not permit me to bear it. If my services are not thought necessary, why do you not mention it to me fairly? It is not becoming to the dignity of Congress to give such usage to an officer of my age and rank."—*MS. Letter*, Fishkill, April 22d.

This tone of anger and insult was more than the best friends of the writer could withstand or excuse. Apologies were attempted by some of the members, yet no opposition was made to accepting his resignation. But it appeared that his design was misapprehended, although expressed in the strongest language. In reply to a letter from the President of Congress, communicating the resolution by which his resignation was accepted, he endeavored to explain his meaning, and added: "I am willing to apologize for the orthographical and grammatical faults; I am an Irishman, and learnt my English in France, but I do not conceive that any of these letters could be construed into a request to resign. I had no thoughts of resigning, while there was a prospect of firing a single shot, and especially at the beginning of this campaign, which in my opinion will be a very hot one."—Albany, May 18th.

This letter produced no favorable impression in Congress. The author himself soon followed, and on the 7th of June wrote from Yorktown to his friend Gates, who was then at Fishkill: "I had never a sufficient idea of cabals until I reached this place. My reception, you may imagine, was not a warm one. I must except Mr. Samuel Adams, Colonel Richard Henry Lee, and a few others, who are attached to you, and who cannot oppose the torrent. Before my arrival, General Mifflin had joined General Washington's army, where he commands a division. One Mr. Carroll from Maryland, upon whose friendship I depended, is one of the hottest of the cabal. He told me a few days ago, almost literally, that any body, who displeased or did not admire the Commander-in-chief, ought not to be kept in the army."—See Sparks' *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, vol. i., p. 169.

Colo. Johnson set out on Saturday afternoon to wait on Congress upon the subject of his appointment and I presume will be at York to-day.

I shall announce the resolution of the 15th to the army, and would flatter myself it will quiet in a great measure the uneasinesses, which have been so extremely distressing, and prevent resignations, which had proceeded, and were likely to be at such a height, as to destroy our whole military system. It has experienced no inconsiderable shock, particularly in the line of some States, from the loss of several very valuable officers.

The letter and brevet for Colonel Allen I will transmit by the first opportunity. He left camp eight days ago.[1] From a variety of concurring circumstances, and the uniform report of persons, who have left Philadelphia within four days past, it would appear that the enemy mean to evacuate the city. It is said they have already embarked a part of their heavy cannon and baggage, and that transports are fitted and fitting for their horse, and taking in hay. The accounts further add, that there has been a press for some nights in the city, and several men obtained

[1] Allen had been exchanged for Col. Campbell, and immediately went to headquarters. Washington wrote to Congress on the 12th:

"I have been happy in the exchange, and a visit from Lieutenant-Colonel Allen. His fortitude and firmness seem to have placed him out of the reach of misfortune. There is an original something in him, that commands admiration; and his long captivity and sufferings have only served to increase, if possible, his enthusiastic zeal. He appears very desirous of rendering his services to the States, and of being employed; and at the same time does not discover any ambition for high rank. Congress will herewith receive a letter from him; and I doubt not they will make such provision for him, as they may think proper and suitable."

in this way, and carried aboard ship; also that there had been an increased number of vendues. These circumstances all indicate an evacuation; but I have not been able to learn the objects of their future operations. I wrote to General Gates yesterday upon the subject, that he may be prepared in the best manner the situation of things will admit, in case they should be destined for the North River, and desired him to retain for the present all the eastern recruits intended for this army.

The quartermaster-general and commissary of provisions are directed to use every possible exertion for putting the affairs of their departments in a train to facilitate a movement, in case it should be necessary. But such have been the derangements and disorders in them, that we must be greatly embarrassed for a considerable time yet.

A valuable detachment, under the command of the Marquis de Lafayette, marched this morning, which is intended to move between the Delaware and the Schuylkill, for restraining the enemy's parties procuring intelligence, and to act as circumstances may require.

I cannot help feeling for the prisoners in possession of the enemy. If they evacuate Philadelphia, those unhappy men will be dragged away with them, and perhaps to a more miserable confinement. But, supposing their future treatment should not be worse, or even that it should be more comfortable than their past, the idea of being removed farther from their friends, and farther from relief, must distress them to the last degree. I have the honor, &c.

P. S.—I would take the liberty to mention, that I think the Arms & Cloathing expected from France, should be brought forward without a moment's delay after they arrive. The impolicy of suffering them ever to remain in places accessible to shipping out of the question, our distress for both is amazingly great. We have many men now without Firelocks & many coming in, in the same predicament, and Half the Army are without shirts.

Our condition for want of the latter & Blankets is quite painful—of the former very distressing. The Doctors attribute in a great degree the loss of Hundreds of lives to the scarcity of cloathing, and I am certain Hundreds have deserted from the same cause.[1]

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

DEAR SIR, VALLEY FORGE, 25 May, 1778.

If any thing of greater moment had occurred, than declaring that every word contained in the pamphlet, which you were obliging enough to send me, was spurious, I should not have suffered your favor of the 6th instant to remain so long unacknowledged. These

[1] Read in Congress, May 20th. Referred to the committee lately in camp.

"Besides the deficiency in the reinforcements expected from Virginia, there is another circumstance which has chagrined me much; I mean the resignations of her officers. I cannot account for it, but so it is, that they have taken the lead far before all others in this instance, and have severely shocked their line. It is difficult to conceive the confusion and the injury which have flowed from this unhappy practice, and from the long extraordinary absence of many others. The inclosed list will show you that I have but too much reason for being chagrined, and I know, Sir, that your concern will not be less than mine."—*Washington to Governor Henry*, 23 May, 1778.

letters are written with a great deal of art. The intermixture of so many family circumstances (which, by the by, want foundation in truth) gives an air of plausibility, which renders the villainy greater; as the whole is a contrivance to answer the most diabolical purposes. Who the author of them is, I know not. From information, or acquaintance, he must have had some knowledge of the component parts of my family; but he has most egregiously mistaken facts in several instances. The design of his labors is as clear as the sun in its meridian brightness.

The favorable issue of our negotiation with France is matter for heartfelt joy, big with important events, and it must, I should think, chalk out a plain and easy road to independence. From this I hope we shall not depart, from a mistaken opinion, that the great work is already finished; nor, to finish it, adopt measures of precipitation. Great Britain, since the declaration of the King of France through the Marquis de Noailles, has no choice but war. Under their present circumstances, how they will conduct it, is a matter not so easily understood, as all their ways have been ways of darkness. That they will be under a necessity of giving up the continent, or their islands, seems obvious to me, if the accounts we have received of the French force in the West Indies be true. Halifax and Canada will, I presume, be strengthened; and, if they can afford a garrison sufficient, they may attempt to hold New York, unless every idea of subjugating America is given up, in which case their whole resentment will be levelled at France.

The enemy are making every preparation, and seem to be upon the point of leaving Philadelphia. In my own judgment, and from many corresponding circumstances, I am convinced they are bound to New York; whether by land or water, whether as a place of rendezvous, or to operate on North River, is not so clear. Our situation here, on account of the sick and stores, is embarrassing, as I dare not detach largely to harass the enemy, in case of a land movement through the Jerseys, before they have actually crossed the Delaware; and then it will be too late, as their distance to South Amboy will be much less than ours, and nothing to obstruct them. To this may be added the advantage of a day's march, which they must gain of us. Were it not for the number of our sick (upwards of three thousand in camp), and the securing of our stores, which are covered by our present position and strength, I could take such a post in Jersey, as would make their passage through that State very difficult and dangerous to them. But the impracticability of doing this, without exposing this camp to insult and injury is well known to them; and some part of their conduct justifies a report, that, at all events, they will not aim a blow at this army before they go off.

I observe what you say respecting the recruits, or rather drafts, from Virginia. I was never called upon by the State for officers, or directed by Congress to send any to aid in the business; but, thinking such a measure might be necessary, I ordered the officers of the disbanded regiments, and such as had gone to

Virginia on furlough, to call upon and receive the governor's orders, with respect to the marching of them to camp. That something has been wrong in conducting the drafts, and assembling the men, admits of no doubt; for, out of the fifteen hundred ordered last fall, and the two thousand this spring, we have received only twelve hundred and forty-two, which is such a deficiency, that I have made a representation thereof to the State. I am, &c.

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

VALLEY FORGE, 26 May, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your Letter of the 11th Inst. with a Deed to Mr. Henry came safe by Mr. Lund Washington—In lieu of the latter, I have executed a Deed to you, conveying all the right title and Interest which I, or any person claiming by, from, or under me can have to the Land.—More than this cannot be expected, as I purchased the Land at your own desire; by the advice of your friends; and without intending, or receiving, the smallest benefit therefrom, after having the title fully investigated by Mr. Wythe. For me therefore to give a general warrantee of the Land to Mr. Henry, thereby subjecting my Estate for the value of it, is what I cannot entertain a thought of, altho I believe there is not the smallest doubt of the goodness of the Title.—Mr. Henry will, I presume, require a general warrantee; it is for this purpose therefore I made the Deed to you, & Black will be

responsible to you; as to myself, as I only acted the part of a friend & Trustee in the business, I do not mean to be further engaged in the matter than to convey the legal right which is in me. If you had got a Deed drawn for the other Land (in King William) the whole might have been executed at the same time, and the sooner you do it the better—let it be drawn by the one now sent.—I have got the most likely evidences I could, but unless there has been some alteration in our Laws, if it is proved in Court any time within two years it will do, as I am out of the State at present.

The reasons which you assign for selling your Lotts in Williamsburg & James City, and your Lands in Hanovr. & New Kent (where Tr lives) may be good if you can get an adequate price for them and the money is immediately vested in the funds, or laid out in other lands; but if this is not done be assured, it will melt like snow before a hot sun, and you will be able to give as little acct. of the going of it; to which I may add, as I did upon a former occasion, that Lands are permanent—rising fast in value—and will be very dear when our Independancy is established, and the Importance of America better known. —To these, one observation more, may not be unworthy of attention, which is, that in proportion to the brightness of our prospects, and the heaviness of our taxes, the rage for getting quit of, and realizing paper money must cease, and Men & measures will resume a more reasonable tone again; which, if it has already taken place, shews that your scheme will, in

part, prove abortive.—With respect to your purchase of Mr. Robt. Alexander's Land, I can only say that the price you have offered for it is a very great one but as you want it to live at—as it answers your's & Nelly's views—and is a pleasant seat & capable of improvement I do not think the price ought to be a capital object with you, but I am pretty sure that you and Alexander will never agree; for he is so much afraid of cheating himself that if you were to offer him five thousand pounds more than he ever expected to get for his Land the dread of injuring himself or hope of getting more, would cause him first to hesitate & then refuse; which leads me to think that the increasing of your offer, if you were disposed to do so would answer no valuable end, nor bring you one whit nearer the mark.

The Public papers will convey all the news of this Quarter to you except that Genl. Howe has actually sailed for England, & that the Enemy in Philia. appear to be upon the point of evacuating the City for New York.[1] This has made such a change in the Lan-

[1] "I do not yet find, that any troops have gone on board. They give out, that they mean to attack this army before they go off, but I rather think, if they move at all by land, it will be across Jersey. Under this uncertainty, I cannot alter my position, until they change theirs; I hold the army ready to move at the shortest notice towards the North River, should circumstances require it. In the mean time, I would have you make yourself as respectable as possible, by stopping all the recruits, and calling in as many militia as you can feed."—*Washington to Major-General Gates*, 25 May, 1778.

"The Enemy are still in Philadelphia, but the intelligence from thence is so clear and so strong, that it is certain, or nearly as much so as any event can be that is contingent, that they mean to abandon it. Against the various measures they are pursuing, which point to an evacuation, there is but one single circumstance opposed that I can learn, which is, that they are working at their

guage & visages of the Tories of that place, that they are scarce known to be ye same Men. A few great offenders excepted, the disaffected are now endeavoring to make peace with the Country, to which they have been advised by the Enemy. At the same time it is left optional with them to follow the Army.

I am, &c.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

VALLEY FORGE, 29th May, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your favors of the 21st & 23d Inst—both of which have come to my hand since my last to you. Had such a chapter as you speak of

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Redoubts with great industry. But this fact, tho' certainly true, cannot be of sufficient weight to raise a doubt upon the subject, and must be considered as merely calculated to deceive us, and to mask their design. We cannot find out, notwithstanding the most diligent pains, whether their movements will be by Land or Sea; nor are the Inhabitants of the Town satisfied on the point. They have a great many ships, and very large; yet from a preparation of boats at Prince's Bay, on the south side of Staten Island, which I am just advised of, and for some other reasons, a land rout is not improbable."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 28 May, 1778. If the enemy intended to march through Jersey, wrote Washington to Brigadier-General Dickinson, "it is much to be regretted that our present situation incapacitates us for giving them so much annoyance as we possibly might in the other case. The number of sick in camp and its vicinity who, as well as our stores, must be guarded, renders it highly imprudent to make any considerable detachment previous to the actual commencement of the enemy's march, as the remaining part of the army would be exposed to a sudden attack from their whole force, and little can be hoped from pursuit after their departure, considering the distance and the ground which they will have gained in their first march. It has besides been reported and believed by many people that the enemy's intention is to make an attack upon this army before they finally evacuate Philadelphia; and that they are only disengaging themselves of every thing that would encumber their retreat in case of misfortune, and, although this may be only thrown out to cover their real designs, our intelligence is too various to reduce their plan to an absolute certainty."—28 May, 1778.

been written to the rulers of mankind it would I am persuaded, have been as unavailing as many others upon subjects of equal importance—We may lament that things are not consonant with our wishes, but cannot change the nature of Men, and yet those who are distressed by the folly and perverseness of it, cannot help complaining, as I would do on the old score of regulation and arrangement, if I thought any good would come of it[1]:

It appears to me that British politics are aground, & that administration is reduced to the alternative (if war is declared, which I cannot doubt) of relinquishing all pretensions to conquest in America, or must give up her Islands. Which she *will* choose I cannot say; which she *ought* to do, is evident, but how far obstinacy, revenge & villainy, may enduce them to persevere, I shall not undertake to determine.—That the enemy in Philadelphia are bound to New York, I have no doubt—whether as a place of rendezvous, or to facilitate any operations up the North River, time, & less of it than you have taken to arrange the business of this army, will unfold—whether they will go thence by land or water, or whether they may not pay their compliments to us

[1] "We are going on with the regimental arrangements as fast as possible, and I think the Day begins to appear with Respect to this Business. Had our Saviour addressed a Chapter to the Rulers of Mankind, as he did many to the subjects, I am persuaded his good sense would have dictated this Text—Be not wise overmuch. Had the several members which compose our multifarious Body been only wise enough, our Business would long since have been compleated. But our superior Abilities, or the Desire of appearing to possess them, lead us to such exquisite tediousness of Debate, that the most precious moments pass unheeded away like vulgar Things."—*Gouverneur Morris to Washington*, 21 May, 1778.

before they go, is not yet certain—my own opinion is that they will march the flower of their army, unincumbered with baggage through the Jerseys, & it is much to be lamented that our strength, the number & situation of our sick, & stores, will not allow us to make a larger detachment (previous to their move) than a brigade in aid of the militia of that State; but were we to do this, if they had no serious thoughts before of visiting this army, a large detachment from it, out of recalling distance, might enduce a measure of this kind, & expose upwards of three thousand sick which we have not conveniency to remove, to insult perhaps to a capital stroke & loss—

If I could spare a brigade from this army for Rhode Island, I should not hesitate a moment in my choice of the person you have mentioned[1] but Congress most assuredly knew that since McIntosh has left us[2] No. Carolina wants one for the Troops of that State—Virginia two (as Muhlenburg only waits the

[1] "If you send any General to Rhode Island, you will probably find it most convenient to get rid of Varnum, whose temper and manners are by no means calculated to teach Patience, Discipline and Subordination."—*Gouverneur Morris to Washington*, 23 May, 1778.

[2] "The Congress having been pleased to direct me to appoint an officer to command at Fort Pitt, and on the western frontiers, in the room of Brigadier-General Hand, I am induced, but not without reluctance, from the sense I entertain of your merit, to nominate you, as an officer well qualified from a variety of considerations to answer the objects they may have in view. I do not know particularly what the objects are, which Congress have in contemplation in this command; and I therefore request that you will, as soon as you conveniently can, repair to Yorktown and receive their instructions respecting them. I have only to add, that I shall be happy to hear from you as often as opportunity will permit, and my warmest wishes, that your services may be honorable to yourself and approved by your country."—*Washington to Brigadier-General McIntosh*, 26 May, 1778.

arrival of a successor)—Maryland one—Pennsylvania (till Hand arrives) one—Massachusetts two—& these exclusive of what were thought necessary for the light troops (if any were ever to be formed). What am I to do with Putnam? If Congress mean to lay him aside *decently*, I wish they would devise the mode.—He wanted some time ago to visit his family; I gave him leave, & requested him to superintend the forwarding of the Connecticut recruits—This service he says is at an end, & is now applying for orders. —If he comes to this army he must be in high command (being next in rank to Lee)—if he goes to the North River he must command Gates, or serve under a junior officer—The sooner these embarrassments could be removed the better—If they are not to be removed, I wish to know it, that I may govern myself accordingly; indecision & suspense in the military line, are hurtful in the extreme.

The Marquis by depending on the militia to patroll the roads on his left, had very near been caught in a snare—in fact he was in it—but by his *own dexterity* or the enemy's *want of it*, he disengaged himself in a very soldierlike manner, & by an orderly & well conducted retreat got out, losing three men killed & a like number taken *only*.—Of the enemy about the same number were taken, three or four times as many killed & wounded, besides those who died of the fatigue & some of their cavalry disabled—Upon the whole the Marquis came handsomely off, and the enemy returned disappointed & disgraced—loading poor Grant with obliquy for his conduct on the occa-

sion; sneeringly asking, how 5000 men were to go through the Continent when 2500 only, shifted their ground in his view, & looked at him at the head of six or seven thousand with good countenances.

I had wrote this far when your favor begun on the 27th & ended on the 28th came to hand—With respect to appointments, promotions, etc. I have not a word more to say—My earnest wish is that something, I do not care what, may be fixed & the regulations completed. It is a lamentable prospect to a man who has seen, and felt as many inconveniences as I have from the unsettled & disordered condition of the Army, to perceive that we are again to be plunged into a moving state (after near six months repose) before the intended regulations are made & the officers informed who are, & who are not, to be continued in service under the new establishment.

Your idea of levying contributions on the city of Philadelphia widely differs from mine, & the spirit of the proclamation[1] of Congress to each State—that I had never entertained a single thought of the kind. A measure of this sort, in my judgment would not only be inconsistent with sound policy, but would be looked upon as on arbitrary stretch of military power —inflame the country as well as city, & lay the foundation of much evil. If Congress are in the same sentiments with you I could wish to have them clearly & explicitly expressed & without a moment's loss of time, as, *between you & I*, I have no idea of marching more than a small detachment to the city, to prevent plundering and disorder till some kind of civil gov-

[1] I am not sure of this word—it is abbreviated and not plainly written.—W. C. F.

ernment can be established; in effecting which no time should be lost by this state, and to secure any public stores which may be left, and aid the quarter-master, &c. in providing for the Army.[1]

Your letter to General Clinton shall go under cover of one I had just written & was about to dispatch on other matters.

Very sincerely I remain, &c.[2]

TO HENRY LAURENS.

VALLEY FORGE, 29 May, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your polite favor of the 5th instant, I duly received, and thank you much for the information contained in it. At the same time, I earnestly request

[1] "I should be glad to know, in case Philadelphia is evacuated, whether any and what line of conduct is to be pursued respecting the goods that may be left. Such articles, as come under the denomination of public stores, will of course be taken by the proper officers for the use of the States. The point on which I wish direction is, with respect to goods and merchandise, private property. I do not know whether any considerable quantity may be left; but it has been suggested, that, from an expectation of the sort, there are some bringing into light their gold and silver for the purpose of buying up. If there should be clothing suitable for the army, perhaps there might be nothing unjust in the public's taking the preference, and Congress appointing one or two intelligent, active persons of address, acquainted with the city and with those who have the goods, with proper powers to purchase them.

"Whatever measure may be thought expedient, it will be necessary to adopt it as early as possible, as the evacuation will probably take place in a short time. Robert Morris, Esq. I should imagine, if the purchasing scheme is determined on, will be able to point out proper persons. Some gentlemen have mentioned Messrs. Samuel Howell and Thomas Franklin as well qualified, both on account of their integrity and attachment to our cause, as from their knowledge of the city and residence in it ever since the enemy had the possession." —*Washington to the President of Congress*, 1 June, 1778.

[2] Miss Annie Cary Morris, of Morrisania, very courteously gave me a copy of this letter.

that you will indulge me with an excuse for not answering it before. A constant crowd of business, and the intervention of a variety of circumstances, have been the cause, and not an inattention to the rules of civility or to those of friendship.

Your letter gave me the first intimation of the disagreement between our commissioners. The event is disagreeable and painful; and, unless they can bring themselves to harmonize, their proceedings will not probably consult the public interest, so well as they otherwise might. It is certain, that they will not have that degree of respect, either at home or abroad. Their embassy is a most interesting one, and may involve consequences which will lead, in a small degree, to the happiness or misery of their country. I hope reflection and a due consideration will set them right.[1]

The act of the 22d of April will certainly require the commissioners,[2] if they come at all, to be vested with much more ample powers than Lord North's bills professed, or their mission wiil be ridiculously mortifying. Indeed men, who would come out under the powers expressed in the bills, after all that has passed, deserve to be mortified in the extreme. I am happy the report and consequent resolution were previous to the treaty and alliance with France being known. The Parliament have been so much parties to this war, and to all the proceedings respecting it, that it

[1] The history of the doings of the American commissioners in Paris, and of their disagreements, may be found in the first volume of the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*.

[2] The British commissioners expected from England.

would seem the Crown itself has no authority, either to continue or to end it, or to do any thing else, without their express concurrence.

I sincerely wish the military arrangement to be completed. The delay is attended with great inconvenience and injury. While it remains open, our whole system cannot but be imperfect. I know that Congress have a variety of important matters to call their attention; but, I assure you, there are few if any that are more interesting than what this is. The question of half-pay being decided, I shall not trouble you with a further discussion of the subject. It must be granted, however, that, in the situation of our affairs, the measure or something substantially the same had become necessary. Nor can I, after balancing in my mind and giving the subject the fairest consideration I am capable of, esteem it unjust. I assure you, Sir, however we may have differed in sentiment on this point, I am fully convinced that the strictest candor forms a part of your character, and request you to believe, that I am, with great attachment and esteem, &c.[1]

[1] President Laurens was strongly opposed to the scheme of half-pay for life. "I view the scheme," says he, "as altogether unjust and unconstitutional in its nature, and full of dangerous consequences. It is an unhappy dilemma to which we seem to be reduced; provide for your officers in terms dictated to you, or lose all the valuable soldiers among them; establish a pension for officers, make them a separate body to be provided for by the honest yeomanry and others of their fellow-citizens, many thousands of whom have equal claims, upon every ground of loss of estate and health, or lose your army and your cause. That such provision will be against the grain of the people has been unwarily testified by its advocates, whom I have heard converse upon the subject. Indeed they have furnished strong ground for opposition against an immediate compliance with the demand. If we cannot make justice one of the

P.S. The letter for Mr. Pettit was sent to him in a day or two after it came to hand. I most sincerely wish, that Congress would lay the charge, and order trial of the major-generals in disgrace. St. Clair is exceedingly uneasy and distressed at the delay; and with pain I add, that the proceeding, or more properly not proceeding, in this matter, is looked upon as cruel and oppressive.

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pillars, necessity may be submitted to at present; but republicans will at a proper time withdraw a grant, which shall appear to have been extorted. Were I in private conversation with an officer on this point, I should not despair of fairly balancing every grievance he might suppose to be peculiar to the army, by instances of losses and inconveniences in my own property and person; and I count myself very happy compared with thousands, who have as faithfully adhered to our original compact.

"Would to God, gentlemen had followed the noble, patriotic example of their Commander-in-chief. How superior are many of the gentlemen now in my contemplation (for I know many with whom I do not converse) to the acceptance of half-pay, contributed to by widows and orphans of soldiers, who had bled and died by their sides, shackled with a condition of being excluded from the privilege of serving in offices in common with their fellow-citizens, bated in every House of Assembly as the drones and incumbrances of society, pointed at by boys and girls,—'There goes a man, who robs me every year of part of my pittance.' I think, Sir, I do not overstrain. This will be the language of republicans. How pungent, when applied to gentlemen, who shall have stepped from the army into a good remaining estate! How much deeper to some, who, in idleness and by peculation, have amassed estates in the war! I am most heartily disposed to distinguish the gallant officer and soldier by the most liberal marks of esteem, and desirous of making proper provision for all, who shall stand in need. I would not except even some of the brave, whose expenses have been princely in extravagance, while they complained of insufficiency of pay."

The opinions and arguments of President Laurens, in opposition to the scheme of half-pay, are expressed much more at large in a letter from him to Governor Livingston, who declared himself a disciple of the same school. "In my private judgment," said the Governor, "I should be totally against the plan of allowing the officers half-pay after the war; it is a very pernicious precedent in republican States; will load us with an immense debt, and render the pensioners themselves in a great measure useless to their country."—Sedgwick's *Life of William Livingston*, pp. 272, 281.

TO LANDON CARTER.

VALLEY FORGE, 30 May, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your favors of the 10th of March (ended the 20th) and 7th inst. came safe to hand after a good deal of delay.

I thank you much for your kind and affectionate remembrance and mention of me, and for that solicitude for my welfare, which breathes through the whole of your letters. Were I not warm in my acknowledgments for your distinguished regard, I should feel that sense of ingratitude, which I hope will never constitute a part of my character, nor find a place in my bosom. My friends therefore may believe me sincere in my professions of attachment to them, whilst Providence has a joint claim to my humble and grateful thanks, for its protection and direction of me, through the many difficult and intricate scenes, which this contest hath produced; and for the constant interposition in our behalf, when the clouds were heaviest and seemed ready to burst upon us.

To paint the distresses and perilous situation of this army in the course of last winter, for want of cloaths, provisions, and almost every other necessary, essential to the well-being, (I may say existence,) of an army, would require more time and an abler pen than mine; nor, since our prospects have so miraculously brightened, shall I attempt it, or even bear it in remembrance, further than as a memento of what is due to the great Author of all the care and good, that have been extended in relieving us in difficulties and distress.

The accounts which you had received of the accession of Canada to the Union were premature. It is a measure much to be wished, and I believe would not be displeasing to the body of that people; but, while Carleton remains among them, with three or four thousand regular troops, they dare not avow their sentiments, (if they really are favorable,) without a strong support. Your ideas of its importance to our political union coincide exactly with mine. If that country is not with us, it will, from its proximity to the eastern States, its intercourse and connexion with the numerous tribes of western Indians, its communion with them by water and other local advantages, be at least a troublesome if not a dangerous neighbor to us; and ought, at all events, to be in the same interests and politics, of the other States.

If all the counties in Virginia had followed the example of yours, it would have been a fortunate circumstance for this army; but instead of fifteen hundred men, under the first draft, and two thousand from the latter, we have by an accurate return made me four days ago received only twelve hundred and forty-two in the whole. From hence, unless you can conceive our country possessed of less virtue, or less knowledge in the principles of government than other States, you may account for the multitude of men, which undoubtedly you have heard our army consisted of, and consequently for many things, which, without such a key, would seem mysterious.

With great truth I think I can assure you, that the information you received from a gentleman at Sabine

Hall, respecting a disposition in the northern officers to see me superseded in my command by General G—s is without the least foundation. I have very sufficient reasons to think, that no officers in the army are more attached to me, than those from the northward, and of those, none more so than the gentlemen, who were under the immediate command of G—s last campaign. That there was a scheme of this sort on foot, last fall, admits of no doubt; but it originated in another quarter; with three men,[1] who wanted to aggrandize themselves; but finding no support, on the contrary, that their conduct and views, when seen into, were likely to undergo severe reprehension, they slunk back, disavowed the measure, and professed themselves my warmest admirers. Thus stands the matter at present. Whether any members of Congress were privy to this scheme, and inclined to aid and abet it, I shall not take upon me to say; but am well informed, that no whisper of the kind was ever heard in Congress.

The draughts of bills as mentioned by you, and which have since passed into acts of British legislation, are so strongly marked with folly and villany, that one can scarce tell which predominates, or how to be surprised at any act of a British minister. This last trite performance of Master North's is neither more nor less than an insult to common sense, and shows to what extremity of folly wicked men in a bad cause are sometimes driven; for this rude Boreas, who was to bring America to his feet, knew at the

[1] Conway, Gates, and Mifflin.

time of draughting these bills, or had good reason to believe, that a treaty had actually been signed between the court of France and the United States. By what rule of common sense, then, he could expect that such an undisguised artifice would go down in America I cannot conceive. But, thanks to Heaven, the tables are turned; and we, I hope, shall have our independence secured, in its fullest extent, without cringing to this Son of Thunder, who I am persuaded will find abundant work for his troops elsewhere; on which happy prospect I sincerely congratulate you and every friend to American liberty.

The enemy seem to be upon the point of evacuating Philadelphia—and I am persuaded are going to New York—whether as a place of rendezvous of their whole force, for a general imbarkation, or to operate up the North River, or to act from circumstances is not quite so clear. My own opinion is, that they must either give up the Continent or the Islands; which they will do, is [not] clear; and yet, I think, they will endeavor to retain New York, if they can by any means spare troops enough to garrison it. Reinforcements will, undoubtedly, be sent to Canada, Nova Scotia, &c.; and I presume must go from their army in America, as I trust full employment will be found for their subscription, and other Troops in England and Ireland. Equally uncertain is it, whether the Enemy will move from Philadelphia by Land or Water. I am inclined to think the former, and lament that the number of our sick (under inoculation, &c.), the situation of our stores, and other matters, will not

allow me to make a large detachment from this army till the enemy have actually crossed the Delaware and began their march for South Amboy,—then it will be too late; so that we must give up the idea of harassing them *much* in their march through the Jerseys, or attempt it at the hazard of this Camp, and the stores which are covered by the army that lays in it, if we should divide our forces, or remove it wholly, which by the by, circumstanced as the Quartermaster's department is, is impracticable.[1]

I am sorry it is not in my power to furnish you with the letter required, which, (with many others,) was written to show, that I was an enemy to independence, and with a view to create distrust and jealousy. I never had but one of them, and that I sent to Mrs. Washington, to let her see what obliging folks there were in the world. As a sample of it, I enclose you another letter, written for me to Mr. Custis, of the same tenor, and which I happen to have by me. It is no easy matter to decide, whether the villany or

[1] "If the States will not or cannot send their quota of troops into the field, it is no fault of mine. I have been urgent in my requisitions on that head; and whatever consequences may arise from the deficiency, will not, I trust, be chargeable on me. I cannot detach the reinforcement you request. The enemy are yet in possession of Philadelphia in full force, and we have near four thousand men in this camp sick of the smallpox and other disorders. I have sent the whole of the Jersey troops to that State, to harass them in their march, in case they proceed to New York by land; and General Maxwell, who commands them, is ordered, as soon as they shall have passed through, or the moment he is informed that they are embarked, to repair with all possible expedition to Newburg, and take your directions. The whole of the army, besides, is under marching orders, and, as soon as Philadelphia is evacuated, will move as fast as circumstances will admit towards the North River. I have written to Colonel Sheldon, and directed him to proceed immediately with the regiment to Fishkill."—*Washington to Major-General Gates*, 29 May, 1778.

artifice of these letters is greatest. They were written by a person, who had some knowledge or information of the component parts of my family, and yet so deficient in circumstances and facts, as to run into egregious misrepresentations of both.

I have spun out a long letter, and send it to you in a very slovenly manner; but, not having time to give it with more fairness, and flattering myself into a belief, that you had rather receive it in this dress than not at all, I shall make no other apology for the interlineations and scratches you will find in it, than you will please to allow my hurried situation. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

Poor's, Varnum's, and Huntington's brigades are to march in one division under your command to the North River. The quartermaster-general will give you the route, encampment, and halting-days, to which you will conform as strictly as possible, to prevent interfering with other troops, and that I may know precisely your situation on every day. Leave as few sick and lame on the road as possible. Such as are absolutely incapable of marching with you are to be committed to the care of proper officers, with directions to follow as fast as their condition will allow.

Be strict in your discipline, suffer no rambling, keep the men in their ranks and the officers with their divisions, avoid pressing horses as much as possible, and punish severely every officer or soldier, who shall presume to press without proper authority. Prohibit the burning of fences. In a word, you are to protect the persons and property of the inhabitants from every kind of insult and abuse.

Begin your march at four o'clock in the morning at latest, that

it may be over before the heat of the day, and that the soldiers may have time to cook, refresh, and prepare for the ensuing day. Given at Head Quarters this 30th day of May, 1778.

P. S. *June 18th.* The foregoing instructions may serve you for general directions, but circumstances having varied since they were written, you are to halt on the first strong ground after passing the Delaware at Coryell's Ferry, till further orders, unless you should receive authentic intelligence, that the enemy have proceeded by a direct route to South Amboy (or still lower). In this case you will continue your march to the North River, agreeably to former orders, and by the route already given you. If my memory does not deceive me, there is an advantageous spot of ground at the ferry to the right of the road leading from the water.

TO SIR HENRY CLINTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 31 May, 1778.

SIR,

I had the honor last night to receive your favor of the 30th instant. I am sorry that I cannot see the necessity of the interview you propose. If you, or Lord Howe, have any dispatches for Congress, and think fit to transmit them to my care, they shall be forwarded by the earliest opportunity. If you have any of a military nature, for me, for none other can come properly under my consideration, I wish them to be communicated in writing, and in the usual way. This will prevent any trouble on part of Colonel Paterson, and must answer, I should suppose, all the purpose you may have in view. I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.[1]

[1] Sir Henry Clinton took command of the British army in Philadelphia on the 11th of May, in the place of Sir William Howe, who shortly afterwards returned to England. Sir Henry Clinton wished to send to Washington a number of the conciliatory bills, and asked for a time when Col. Paterson could deliver them.

THOUGHTS UPON A PLAN OF OPERATIONS FOR THE CAMPAIGN OF 1778.[1]

In our present situation, and under our present prospects, there appears to be but one of three things that we either can do, or ought to attempt—First, by a collected force, to aim at the destruction of the Enemy in Philadelphia.—Secondly, by dividing it to attempt something against New York whilst Troops are left to cover this Country—& thirdly, by doing neither, lay quiet in a secure Camp and endeavor by every possible means to train and discipline our Army; thereby making our numbers (tho' small) as formidable as possible.—The first is, undoubtedly, the most desirable object, if within the reach of possibility—the second, is also an important one, if practicable upon rational grounds—the third, we certainly have in our power to accomplish, if it is advisable.

Each of them deserves mature consideration, & should be placed in every point of light, that human wisdom can view them. —The two first requires the aid of Militia—will be attended with considerable expence—great waste of military stores, and arms—and will call for great supplies of Provisions; which, probably, are not within our reach.—the third would be giving the Enemy time to receive their reinforcements, spread their baneful influence more extensively—and be a means of disgusting our own People by our apparent inactivity—but to judge accurately of points of this magnitude, let each case be considered seperately, and the advantages, & disadvantages, with the number of men necessary for their execution, be fairly stated and canvassed, without having much regard to popular opinion.

By the first of June we may, I should suppose, count upon 17,000 Continental Troops fit for duty, in this State, Including those upon the North River, and at Albany; & I think we shall not over rate the Enemy in Philadelphia if we place them at 10,000 exclusive of Marines & Seamen.—How many men, then, and what measures, are necessary, to attempt any thing with a prospect of success against this number of Troops on that City? are questions that naturally lead me into a consideration of the

[1] From a *MS.* in Washington's writing, without date.

FIRST PLAN.

Out of the aforesaid number of 17,000 Continental Troops, not less than two thousand, I should suppose even with the aid of militia can maintain our Posts and Forts on the North River, and secure the Important Communication with the Eastern States; from whence, most of our supplies must come—this reduces the number to 15,000; and two methods of attack presenting themselves for consideration, to wit, by regular approaches, and Blockade, I will make a few observations on each—

The attack by regular approaches simply, & unconnected with a Blockade, would require the least number of Men, because they would be more compact, and their operations more confined; but even here, not less I shd think than 20,000 Men (which will be a call upon the Militia for 5000) would be sufficient to afford Detachments, carry on the Works, and resist a Sortie of the Enemy's whole force.—In case of good behavior in the Troops on both sides (& we have little room to doubt it on theirs) what time will it probably take to carry the Lines?—What expence of Ammunition? What will our probable loss be? and what shall we gain by it, their retreat being open, easy, and secure by water and their Stores removed.—A Quantity of Goods might be found there, belonging to Individuals, whose property would deserve confiscation, and that would be all, except the honor of driving them from the City.

To attempt to reduce the City, or rather Troops in it, by a Blockade, it is indispensably necessary to possess Billingsport, with Troops sufficient to hold it against any number not much short of the Enemy's whole force; for which reason, I should think much less than 5000 men at the Fort, and in the Jerseys, wd. not Answer the purpose of holding the place, and cutting off their communication with that shore—Another strong body should be in the neighborhood of Derby; as nearly opposite to Billingsport as possible, and strongly Fortified—2500 or three thousand may be sufficient for this Post after it is fortified, because it could be supported from the main body. These two Posts should at all events stop the Passage of ships; or the end of taking them would not, by any means be answered.—18,000 men might then lay in Front of the Enemy's Lines, between the two

Rivers, and secure themselves in Lines, or by Redoubts, and act as circumstances may dictate—A Bridge of communication to be thrown over the Schuylkill, at the most convenient place to this position—and the Galleys to take post as low in the Delaware, and as much upon the left Flank of this position, as Possible.—A number of Boats in their Rear for the purpose of a speedy transportation of Troops across that River if need be—Posts thus taken, & held, would, in time, starve the Town ; or open a door to some other mode of attack, which might prove successful, and more expeditious.—This plan at the lowest computation, requires (in aid of the 15,000 Continental Troops) Ten, or 11,000 Militia.

SECOND PLAN.

To carry this into execution, there must be a separation of our Force, and an aid of Militia—Not less than five or six thousand Troops should go from this army to join those on the North River ; & act in concert with the Militia—as the success of this enterprise would depend in a great measure upon the well timing of matters, and celerity in the execution—hints & false appearances should favor the idea of an attack upon Philadelphia ; in order, if possible, to draw the attention from & weaken New York and its dependencies—a body of 1000 Jersey Militia, including those now at Elizabeth Town, should assemble without fail, at that place, on the 10th day of June—A number of Boats should also be collected there & two or three field Pieces (Iron Cannon) with a view of detaining the Troops on Staten Island, or making a descent thereon, if they should be removed ; or very considerably weakened—these men to be draughted to serve at least two months after they arrive at the place of Rendezvous, the day above mentioned.

A like number of Connecticut Militia to assemble (unincumbered with baggage) at Norwalk ; on the same day ; and to be provided, if possible, with whale Boats sufficient for the Transportation of at least 800 men.—these men and Boats, to move down towards East Chester as the Enemy's lines at Kings bridge, are approached by the main body from the highlands ;—or to act from thence against Long Island or York Island as circumstances may require.

Previous to any movements of this Kind, a correspondence to be settled with Staten Island, & Long Island, to discover what effect these operations, when they take place, will have upon the Troops upon those Islands.

The militia from the States of New York and Connecticut, now at the Posts in the High-lands to be increased to two thousand; where of, five hundred only may be drawn from Connecticut (as they are called upon for a thousand to Rendezvous at Norwalk & are also to furnish Rhode Island with men)—these Troops are also to assemble at Fishkill on the 10th of June with as little Baggage as possible.—All the militia are to serve two months from the date of their arrival, & to bring arms &c. with them.

The Quarter Master Genl. & Commissaries of Provisions, & Military Stores, are to make ample provision in their respective departments under the best colorable pretences to deceive.—The heavy Brass field pieces, & largest Howitzers should be drawn to that Quarter in the same manner, and under like false appearances.—Pontons should be provided for throwing a Bridge across Harlem River, if need be.—A number of Boats should also be provided at the Post in the Highlands—numbered, and the number of men which each will carry precisely ascertained and the whole under skilful officers, to form an imbarkation with regularity and dispatch, if occasion should require it.—Sheeps skin & nails to be provided for muffling the oars.—A redoubt to be thrown up at Kings Ferry to secure the passage of Boats from the Enemy's armed vessells.—and good Horses for transportation of the Artillery—A number of Teams should also be provided for the purpose of Transporting Provisions—Forage & Stores with the Army to Kings Bridge—and this to be done under pretence of transporting Provisions &c. to the Army in this State.—The Commissary of Provisions should also, under the Idea of providing for the Troops, on their march from the North River to this Camp, lay in a stock at Morristown & Sufferans, and a small quantity at Bound Brook.

These several Orders being given, and the alarm communicated to Philadelphia, creating proper jealousies there—and matters upon the No. River, &c. being in a proper Train, the Troops from here for that service may be put in motion in three divisions:

the first may be crossed at Bordenton by the Boats & Galleys, giving oblique hints that they are bound to Billingsport after being joined by the Troops which cross above, but never the less are to halt there, till the effect of the discovery in Phila. of the real movement, is known ; and then advance or, (in case the Enemy should attempt to throw a body of men across to So. Amboy by Land) oppose them in conjunction with the Militia, to the utmost.—and, that as great a body of militia may be drawn forth in case of such an event, as possible, without having them out upon uncertainty & expence, let a Beacon be fixed at the noted Tree near Princeton, to be answered by others on adjacent heights, and fired by order from the Commanding Officer at Bordenton ; upon which the Militia who are to be first previously notified of the intention, are immediately to assemble at Cranberry under cover of the Continental Troops with four days Provin. & by Arms and obstructions in the roads, give every possible opposition to the march of the Enemy.

The Second division which is also to march at the same time, may take the Rout by Trenton (under pretence of not interfering with the first division at Bordenton, thence by Somerset Court House, Springfield, Great Falls, Paramus, Kakeate, &c. to Kings Ferry.

The third division, also marching at the same time & throwing out the same Ideas, may advance by the way of Coryells, Morristown, Pompton, Sufferans &c. to Kings Ferry where Boats are to meet & Transport them. These movements may be countenanced & covered, by the whole Army advancing to the White Marsh or Edgehill. The Rout of each of the two last divisions to be precisely pointed out & their Marches & halting days assigned that it may be known to an hour when they will arrive at the North River ; the day before which the Troops at New Windsor &c. are to take Post at some proper Incampment or the other side to be marked out by proper hands.—from whence, after a little refreshment, & arrangement—the whole are to advance, and take post near the Enemy's Lines and works at Kings bridge. —This undoubtedly, will draw the Enemy's whole force to that place, or nearly so, leaving the city of New York Staten, & long Island, bare of Troops—to remedy this, the shipping will, un-

questionably, be disposed of to the best advantage ; but whether they can afford effectual cover to those places, or not, is a matter of doubt.—If they can, no disadvantage to them will follow their withdrawing the Troops from those Posts—If they cannot their force becomes divided—their attention distracted, by a care for different objects ; and easy descents may be made on the two Islands whilst the city itself—through conscious security may be liable to surprize by a rapid move of the Boats from Peekskill to Philips or that neighborhood, for Troops to imbark, and run down under cover of a dark night, upon the ebb tide, with muffled oars.

If nothing can be effected by the surprize, or a coup de main, it remains to be considered how far the works are to be carried by regular approaches ; and what may be the consequence of spending so much time as must be involved in the operation.—To advance by regular approaches to Fort Independence will, I conceive, be tedious & laborious, on acct. of the roughness of the ground—and must also be expensive in the article of Ammunition. A Bridge should be in readiness to throw over Harlem River ; but unless the city, or Fort Washington could be previously possessed, or there should be force of men and Artillery sufficient to besiege Forts Independence and Washington at the same time, Troops on the Island might be endangered without answering any valuable purpose, as the Enemy could draw their supplies by water under cover of night, maugre any post we could take there.

If upon the whole then our operations are to be confined to regular approaches—first to Fort Independence—then to Fort Washington—& lastly to the city, it is incumbent on us to consider, what time it will take to effect these, and what will be the probable loss on our side in the operations—The first depends upon the nature of the Ground, and the skill with which the works are conducted.—& the second, from the time, & manner of them.—But, a matter of no small moment, is, to judge with some degree of accuracy, of the effect that these operations of ours will have upon the Enemy in Phila. To suppose that General Howe will lay quiet there till his reinforcements arrive, if he thinks New York in danger, is to suppose what I have not the

smallest conception of; and therefore I rather believe that he will pursue one or the other of these two measures; either to reinforce it strongly, leaving a bare Garrison in Philadelphia—or weakly, with some of his most indifferent Regimts. (fit enough however for Garrison duty); and with the flower of his Troops, aim a stroke at this Army, and our Stores; & endeavor by vigorous exertions, to spread Terror & dismay through the State.—If he should adopt the first measure, what chance shall we have of success at New York? and what good will result from the manœuvre? unless fortunately it should be a means of transferring the war to New York—thereby disconcerting General Howe's plans—and placing things in a more eligible situation by removing him from a Country of Supplies, & ourselves to a Country of support—on the other hand, if he should pursue the second Plan, prove successful, and the enterprize on New York unfortunate, will not the world condemn the undertaking as ill judged, and impolitic, it being a well known fact, that little is to be expected from the spirit of the People of this State, in case of such a manœuvre of the British Troops, and much to be apprehended from their disaffection.

THE THIRD PLAN

Has advantages and disadvantages attending it—on the one hand, no advantage is attempted to be taken of the Enemy, in their weakest state—but they suffered to remain in peace, boasting their powers & expectation, & spreading their baneful influence far & wide, till their reinforcements enabled them to take the field with some degree of eclat—&, if considerable, to form new expeditions—to which may be added the disgust, and dissatisfaction of the Public and their concomitant evils.—On the other hand, we are also getting strength in the Continental line, by recruits, Draughts, &c.—and shall have time to train, and discipline our officers & men; making the number even if it should prove small, formidable—We shall have leizure to appoint our officers arrange the Army—& recover from the disordered state we are now in for want of these and knowing upon what establishment the Army will be placed—We should, moreover, be able to form our magazines—examine into the state of our Provisions

and know how far it would be in our power to feed, and supply a promiscuous number before they were assembled, avoiding a considerable expence and infinite waste, which must be incurred with militia in order to attempt that which must be precarious in the Issue, and ruinous if it failed—We could also make this a strong and formidable Post—too formidable to attack, and too dangerous for the Enemy to leave in their Rear, if they should incline to advance into THE COUNTRY.

More reasons might be urged for, & against the three Plans here proposed—much also might be said on the state of our currency—badness of our credit—the temper of our People—their expectations—and their fear of seeing one capital place after another fall into the hands of the Enemy, without an attempt to rescue them—The blockade of our Ports—high prices of commodities &c. are also worthy of great attention. But, as these are matters which must have occurr'd to every one, before whom these considerations are proper to be laid, there needs no particular discussion of them, in this place, although, in the ultimate determination, they are worthy of the closest attention; for altho' reason and sound policy (founded on a due regard to circumstances) must be the basis of our opinions, yet popular expectations should always be complied with, where injury in the execution is not too apparent; especially in such a contest as the one we are engaged in—where the spirit, and willingness of the People must, in a great measure, take place of coercion—

General Sullivan might (to use Gen. Howe's phrase) make demonstration of a descent upon Rhode Island—which would prevent any succor from that Quarter to New York, or expose the Garrison there exceedingly.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 2 June, 1778.

SIR,

I beg leave to inform you, that agreably to the Resolutions transmitted in your Favor of the 31st ulto., I shall undertake the reform of the North Caro-

lina Batallions in camp, as soon as circumstances will admit.

I sincerely wish the Legislatures of the several States had passed Laws, adopting the generous policy, recommended by Congress in their Resolution of the 23d of April. I am assured, by authority not to be questioned, that for want of this, Hundreds nay Thousands of people, and among them many valuable artizans, with large quantities of goods will be forced from Philadelphia, who otherwise would willingly remain. From report, their reluctance and distress upon this occasion, are scarcely to be parallelled. There are a few, whose conduct has been such, that no assurances of security, I presume, could induce them to stay; and their departure, compelled and founded as it were in the approbation of their own consciences, would answer all the purposes of example, especially if followed by a confiscation of the property. A proscribing system, or Laws having the same effect, when carried to a great extent, ever appeared to me to be impolitic; and their operation should always cease with the causes, which produced them. Examples, in terrorem are necessary, but to exile many of its Inhabitants cannot be the interest of any State.[1] I have, &c.

[1] The enemy had resolved to evacuate Philadelphia as early as the 23d of May, and perhaps before. On that day General Clinton wrote to Lord George Germaine, that he had determined to leave Philadelphia and proceed to New York with the whole army, as soon as it could be done. The first intention was to go by water, but twelve days after the date of the letter mentioned above he wrote again as follows: "I found it impracticable to embark the forces in order to proceed to New York by water, as there are not transports enough to receive the whole at once, and therefore a great part of the cavalry, all our pro-

TO MAJOR-GENERAL DICKINSON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
5 June, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of yesterday came safe to hand. What the real designs of the enemy are, remains yet to be discovered. Appearances and a thousand circumstances induce a belief, that they intend to pass through the Jerseys to New York. Your last intelligence however is a let to this opinion, inasmuch as it contradicts a former report of their assembling a number of boats in Prince's Bay. That they will

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vision train, and the persons whose attachment to the government has rendered them objects of vengeance to the enemy, must have been left behind. I am to add to this, that, if we should afterwards have been detained by contrary winds, General Washington might have seized the opportunity of making a decisive push at New York, all accounts from thence seeming to indicate an intent of that sort. These reasons have induced me to resolve on marching through Jersey."—*MS. Letters*, May 23d, June 5th.

General Clinton likewise added, that a large part of the baggage and stores of the army, and valuable merchandise necessary for the troops, were already embarked on board transports; and, also, that the refugees were provided for in those vessels.

Orders for evacuating Philadelphia had been sent by the ministry, dated March 21st, immediately after the French Government had publicly declared, that a treaty had been made with the United States.

It is somewhat curious that these orders were not known to the commissioners, and it was not until they were in Philadelphia and saw the preparations to evacuate the city that they were informed "that every measure relative to this campaign was determined long before our departure from England." The Earl of Carlisle at once recognized the futility of attempting to carry out the commission. "If I was only to follow my feelings, it would be to implore your Lordship in the most serious manner to take such methods as your judgment would suggest to you to free me from the painful burthen of an employment which I was sent at this distance to execute, little suspecting that the same breath which gave life to the undertaking, secretly blasted it in the first moment of its existence, or that such measures were concealed from me, that would have determined me never to have embarked in the business."—*Earl of Carlisle to Lord G[ower]*, July, 1778. Stevens' Fac-similes.

either march to Amboy, and from thence pass to Staten Island, or embark below the chevaux-de-frise, scarcely admits of a doubt; and the first being much the most probable, I would recommend it to you to be in the most perfect readiness for their reception, as you may rely upon it, that their march will be rapid whenever it is begun.

I take the liberty of giving it to you as my opinion, also, that the way to annoy, distress, and really injure the enemy on their march (after obstructing the roads as much as possible) with militia, is to suffer them to act in very light bodies. Were it not for the horse, I should think the parties could not be too small, as every man in this case acts as it were for himself, and would, I conceive, make sure of his man between Cooper's Ferry and South Amboy, as the enemy's guards in front, flank, and rear, must be exposed, and may be greatly injured by the concealed and well directed fire of men in ambush. This kind of annoyance ought to be incessant day and night, and would I think be very effectual. I shall add no more, than that I am, with very sincere regard, dear Sir, &c.

TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

CAMP, NEAR VALLEY FORGE,
10 June, 1778.

DEAR BROTHER,

I do not recollect the date of my last to you, but although it is not long ago, I cannot let so good an opportunity as Captain Turberville affords, slip me.

Your favors of the 10th of April from Bushfield, and 8th of May from Berkeley, are both before me, and have came to hand, I believe, since my last to you.

We have been kept in anxious expectation of the enemy's evacuating Philadelphia for upwards of fourteen days; and I was at a loss, as they had embarked all their baggage and stores on board transports, and had passed all those transports, (a few only excepted,) below the chevaux-de-frise, to account for their delay; when, behold, on Friday last the additional commissioners, to wit, Lord Carlisle, Governor Johnstone, and Mr. William Eden, arrived at the city. Whether this heretofore has been the cause of the delay, I shall not undertake to say, but more than probably it will detain them for some days to come. They give out, as I understand, that we may make our own terms, provided we will but return to our dependence on Great Britain. But if this is their expectation, and they have no other powers than the Acts (which we have seen) give them there will be no great trouble in managing a negotiation; nor will there be much time spent in the business, I apprehend. They talk as usual of a great reinforcement; but whether the situation of affairs between them and France will admit of this, is not quite so clear. My wishes lead me, together with other circumstances, to believe that they will find sufficient employment, for their reinforcements at least, in other quarters. Time, however, will discover and reveal things more fully to us.

Out of your first and second drafts, by which we

ought to have had upwards of thirty-five hundred men for the regiments from that State, we have received only twelve hundred and forty-two in all. I need only mention this fact, in proof of what other States do; of our prospects also; and as a criterion by which you may form some estimate of our real numbers when you hear them, as I doubt not you often do, spoken of in magnified terms. From report, however, I should do injustice to the States of Maryland and New Jersey, were I not to add, that they are likely to get their regiments nearly completed.[1] The extreme fatigue and hardship, which the soldiers underwent in the course of the winter, added to the want of clothes and, I may add, provisions, have rendered them sickly, especially in the brigade you have mentioned (of North Carolina). Many deaths have happened in consequence, and yet the army is in exceeding good spirits.

You have doubtless seen a publication of the treaty with France, the message of the King of France by his ambassador to the court of London, with the King's speech to, and addresses of Parliament upon the occasion. If one was to judge of the temper of these courts from the above documents, war I should

[1] I assure you, Sir, I would willingly give you every justifiable aid from this army. At present, the situation of affairs will not permit my doing more than what I have already. The enemy are yet in Philadelphia with a respectable force, and our's but very little, if any, increased, since you left us, from what reason, I shall not pretend to determine. But certainly there is an unaccountable kind of lethargy in most of the States in making up their quotas of men. It would almost seem from their withholding their supplies or not sending them into the field, that they consider the war as quite at an end."—*Washington to Brigadier-General McIntosh*, 10 June, 1778.

think must have commenced long before this; and yet the commissioners (but we must allow them to lye greatly) say, it had not taken place the 28th of April, and that the differences between the two courts were likely to be accommodated. But I believe not a word of it; and as you ask my opinion of Lord North's speech, and bills, I shall candidly declare to you, that they appear to me, to be a compound of fear, art, and villainy, and these ingredients so equally mixed, that I scarcely know which predominates.

I am sorry to hear of Billy Washington's ill health, but hope he is recovering. Mrs. Washington left this place the day before yesterday for Mount Vernon. My love to my sister and the family is most sincerely offered, and I am, with the truest regard and affection, yours, &c.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

11 June, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your favor of the 8th, which was duly received. I must take the freedom to hint to you, that if in the packets transmitted by this conveyance there are any letters for persons, with whom you are not acquainted, or in whose firmness and attachment you have not an entire confidence, it may not be improper to open them. This, I am persuaded, would be the case. However, I am the more induced to mention it, as the obvious, nay, almost sole design of several letters, which have come to my hands, is to give the commissioners the most favora-

ble characters for candor and integrity, and to establish a belief, that they have the most competent and extensive powers. The letters coming sealed was sufficient to awaken any suspicions, and I shall not transmit a single one of this complexion. I am convinced that you and I move on the same principle, and therefore I am certain that I hazard nothing in taking this liberty.

I am, dear Sir, with great friendship and esteem, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
12 June, 1778.

SIR,

I have your favor of the 8th inst, with its several enclosures. Whether the intention of the enemy is to make the present campaign offensive or defensive, time alone must discover; but if the former, I cannot think they mean to operate against the eastern States in any other manner, than by laying waste their coast and destroying their seaport towns. They

[1] The above letter was accompanied with the despatches from the commissioners, and many private letters from England to members of Congress and others. In his reply, President Laurens wrote:—"Yesterday there was an extraordinary motion on our floor for calling upon members to lay before Congress such letters as they had received from the commissioners and other persons, meaning persons of Great Britain, on political subjects. I could not forbear offering some objections; it appeared to be a dangerous attempt to stretch the power of Congress. My letters had been read by many members, and were at the service of every gentleman, who should request a perusal, but I could never consent to have my property taken from me by an order from my fellow-citizens destitute of authority for the purpose. This circumstance, and some remarks which followed, have induced me to put Governor Johnstone's letter and my intended answer into Mr. Drayton's hands, who is collecting materials for displaying the governor's good designs."—June 18th.

will never venture into a country full of people, who they have always found ready to give them the most spirited opposition. Should the North River be their object, I can, as I have mentioned in my former letters, march such a part of this army thither by the time they can reach it, that they will not be able to effect any thing by a *coup de main.*[1]

The arrival of the commissioners from Great Britain, upon the 7th instant, seems to have suspended the total evacuation of Philadelphia. The transports, except a few store-ships and victuallers, have fallen down the river, and many of the troops are in Jersey, where they have thrown over a number of their horses and wagons. They seem to be waiting until the commissioners shall have announced themselves to Congress, and found whether a negotiation, under their present powers, can be brought about. They asked liberty, upon the 9th, to send their secretary, Dr. Ferguson, to Yorktown; but, not knowing whether this would be agreeable to Congress, I refused the request until I should know their sentiments. The Commissioners are Lord Carlisle, Mr. Will. Eden, and Govr. Johnstone. I am, &c.[2]

[1] General Gates had expressed an opinion, that during the ensuing campaign the enemy would operate up the North River and against the eastern States.

[2] The king's ship of war, *Trident*, of sixty-four guns having on board the commissioners for carrying into effect Lord North's bills, arrived in the Delaware River on the 4th of June.

After the arrival of the commissioners in Philadelphia (June 6th), General Clinton wrote to Washington requesting a passport for Dr. Ferguson to proceed to Congress with despatches. This request was declined, and the letter containing it was forwarded to Congress. Not waiting for the result, the commissioners forwarded their papers to Congress.

"Between one and two o'clock yesterday the packet which your Excellency sent to Congress accompanied by your Excellency's favor of the 11th was

TO MAJOR-GENERAL CHARLES LEE.

DEAR SIR, HEAD-QUARTERS, 15 June, 1778.

I have received your letter of this date, and thank you, as I shall any officer, over whom I have the honor to be placed, for his opinion and advice in matters of importance; especially when they proceed from the fountain of candor, and not from a captious spirit, or an itch for criticism.

No man can be more sensible of the defects of our present arrangement, than I am; no man more sensible of the advantage of having the commander and commanded of every corps well known to each other, and the army properly organized, than myself. Heaven and my own letters to Congress can witness, on the one hand, how ardently I have labored to effect these points during the past winter and spring;

brought into the house. Among other papers, it contained an address from the British Commissioners to Congress. At that minute Congress were determining on a proper reply to be given to Sir Henry Clinton's application for a passport for Doctor Ferguson. I was ordered to read the address, when I had advanced to the second page the house directed me to seal up all the papers, and adjourned to Monday morning."—*Laurens to Washington*, 14 June, 1778.

The subject was again resumed, and on the 17th a reply was ordered to be returned to the commissioners, signed by the President, the substance of which was in accordance with the former proceedings in regard to Lord North's bills. No encouragement was held out, that a conciliation could possibly be effected on the proffered terms. After expressing a readiness to make peace whenever the King of Great Britain should manifest a sincere disposition for that purpose, the President of Congress added:—"The only solid proof of this disposition will be, an explicit acknowledgment of the Independence of these States, or the withdrawing of his fleets and armies." To neither of these conditions was it in the power of the commissioners to accede, and much less was it the intention of Parliament to grant either of them. There was no rational hope, therefore, of any success to the negotiation, or even of a formal beginning.—*Sparks*.

the army, on the other, bears witness to the effect. Suspended between the old and new establishments, I could govern myself by neither with propriety; and the hourly expectation of a committee, for the purpose of reducing some regiments and changing the establishment of all, rendered a mere temporary alteration, (which from its uncertainty and shortness could effect no valuable end), unnecessary. That I had a *power* to shift regiments and alter brigades (every day, if I chose to do it,) I never entertained a doubt of; but the *efficacy* of the measure I have very much questioned, as frequent changes, without apparent causes, are rather ascribed to caprice and whim, than to stability and judgment.

The mode of shifting the major-generals from the command of a division, in the present tranquil state of affairs, to a more important one in action and other capital movements of the whole army, is not less disagreeable to my ideas, than repugnant to yours, but is the result of necessity. For, having recommended to Congress the appointment of lieutenant-generals for the discharge of the latter duties, and they having neither approved nor disapproved the measure, I am hung in suspense; and being unwilling, on the one hand, to give up the benefits resulting from the command of lieutenant-generals in the cases abovementioned, or to deprive the divisions of their major-generals for ordinary duty on the other, I have been led to adopt a kind of medium course, which, though not perfect in itself, is in my judgment the best that circumstances will admit of, till Congress shall have

decided upon the proposition before them.[1] Your remark upon the disadvantages of an officers'being suddenly removed from the command of a division to a wing, though not without foundation, as I have before acknowledged, does not apply so forcible in the present case, as you seem to think it does. There is no major-general in this army, that is not pretty well known, and who may, if he chooses it, soon become acquainted with such officers as may be serviceable to him. Their commands being announced in general orders, and the army prepared for their reception, a major-general may go with the same ease to the command of a wing consisting of five brigades, as to a division composed of two, and will be received with as little confusion, as the brigades remain perfect and no changes have happened in them.

Mr. Boudinot's conjecture of the enemy's intention, although it does not coincide with mine, is nevertheless worthy of attention; and the evils of the measure have been guarded against, as far as it has been in my power, by removing the stores provisions &c. as fast as possible from the Head of Elk and the Susquehanna, &c. and by exploring the country, surveying the roads, and marking the defiles and strong grounds; an engineer and three surveyors having been employed in this work near a month, though

[1] "I am sorry an exchange cannot take place between Genl. Thompson and one of the gentlemen who were supposed to be brigadiers. This method of considering officers as Brigadiers and not considering them as such, does not altogether accord with my ideas of propriety. In the course of the contest we lost one officer that is the difference in rank between a Major and Brigadier, by this mode of conduct. We must take care how we lose another."—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 17 June, 1778.

their report is not yet come in. Boats are also prepared in the Susquehanna for the transportation of our troops, in case we should find it necessary to move that way. But nevertheless it gives me real pleasure to find you have turned your thoughts that way, and are revolving the questions contained in your letter; and here let me again assure you, that I shall be always happy in a free communication of your sentiments upon any important subject relative to the service, and only beg that they may come directly to myself. The custom, which many officers have, of speaking freely of things and reprobating measures, which upon investigation may be found to be unavoidable, is never productive of good, but often of very mischievous consequences. I am &c.[1]

[1] So adroitly had the British made their preparations for a removal from Philadelphia, that it was even at this late hour doubtful what course they intended to pursue. From many concurring circumstances, which he watched narowly, General Washington was at length convinced, that they intended to march through Jersey. But the views of others were quite different; and only three days before the enemy actually crossed the river, and took up their line of march, General Lee wrote to the Commander-in-chief as follows:

"My opinion is, that, if they are in a capacity to act offensively, they will either immediately from Philadelphia, or, by a feint in descending the river as far as Newcastle, and then, turning to the right, march directly and rapidly towards Lancaster, by which means they will draw us out of our present position, and oblige us to fight on terms perhaps very disadvantageous; or that they will leave Lancaster and this army wide on the right, endeavor to take post on the lower parts of the Susquehanna, and, by securing a communication with their ships sent round into the bay for this purpose, he furnished with the means of encouraging and feeding the Indian war, broke out on the western frontier. This last plan I mention as a possibility, but as less probable than the former.

"If they are not in a capacity to act offensively, but are still determined to keep footing on the continent, there are strong reasons to think, that they will not shut themselves up in towns, but take possession of some tract of country, which will afford them elbow-room and sustenance, and which is so situated as

TO JAMES HUNTER, ESQ., NEAR FREDERICKSBURG, VA.

VALLEY FORGE, June 15, 1778.

SIR,

Your favor of the 12th ultimo did not come to my hands 'till yesterday. The land therein mentioned hath not been legally conveyed or properly secured, to me by my mother. This reason, if no other, would prevent me from selling either the land or the wood that grows on it; but I have other reasons against it, equally forcible. One is, that I have had an intention, which my present situation and absence have been the only Bar to the execution, of building a Saw Mill, for the purpose of sawing up the pines which I am told the land abounds in, and which constitutes the chief value of it, provided its bowels have been stripped of all the ore, and which is denied by some. If no disadvantage on account of Roads into the Land, and the consequent destruction of Wood and

to be the most effectually protected by their command of the waters; and I have particular reasons to think, that they have cast their eyes for this purpose on the lower counties of Delaware, and some of the Maryland counties on the Eastern Shore. If they are resolved on this plan, it certainly will be very difficult to prevent them, or remove them afterwards, as their shipping will give them such mighty advantages. Whether they do or do not adopt any one of these plans, there can be no inconvenience arise from considering the subject, nor from devising means of defeating their purposes, on the supposition that they will.

"In short, I think it would be proper to put these queries to ourselves. Should they march directly towards Lancaster and the Susquehanna, or indirectly from Newcastle, what are we to do? Should they, though it is less probable, leave this army, and even Lancaster wide on the right, and endeavour to establish themselves on the lower parts of the Susquehanna, what are we to do? And, should they act only on the defensive, and attempt to secure to themselves some such tract of country as I have mentioned, what measures are we to pursue? These are matters I really think worthy of consideration."—*MS. Letter*, June 15th.

Timber by the Miners and their followers, was to result, I should have no objection, so far as the matter depended upon me; The things at the same time, appearing absolutely necessary for the well being of your Works, to part with the Ore upon terms which shall be judged reasonable between Man & Man. Wishing you success in your undertaking, I am with great Esteem and Regard,

TO JOSEPH REED, DELEGATE IN CONGRESS FROM PENNSYLVANIA.

VALLEY FORGE, 15 June, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you very much for your friendly favor of this date, and your polite attention in submitting the draft of your letter to Governor Johnstone to my perusal. I return it again; but, before you transcribe a fair copy, I would wish to see you upon the subject of it. Perhaps there are some parts of it which might receive a small alteration. In the present situation of things, all correspondence of this nature must and will be weighed and scanned with a scrupulous exactness; and even compliment, if carried far, may not pass entirely uncensured.

There is another consideration with me. Congress perhaps, at this instant, are deliberating on an answer to give the Commissioners to an address, they have received from them. Should a letter, therefore, from a member (in which light you will be considered)

hold out sentiments different from theirs, an unfavorable use, will doubtless be made of it.

I am, dear Sir, your affectionate &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, half after eleven, A.M.,
18 June, 1778.

SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform Congress, that I was this minute advised by Mr. Roberts that the enemy evacuated the city early this morning. He was down at the Middle Ferry on this side, where he received the intelligence from a number of the citizens, who were on the opposite shore. They told him that about three thousand of the troops had embarked on board transports. The destruction of the bridge prevented him from crossing. I expect every moment official accounts on the subject. I have put six brigades in motion; and the rest of the army are preparing to follow with all possible despatch. We shall proceed towards Jersey, and govern ourselves ac-

[1] General Reed was probably at this time in camp, as one of the committee from Congress for arranging the army.

"The Baron Steuben will have the honor to deliver you this. I do not know particularly the extent of his business at York; but, from what he has communicated, it is in part to get the duties and powers of his appointment minutely defined and settled. I enclose a copy of orders on the 15th instant, which were issued to quiet the minds of the general officers, and to remove a spirit of jealousy, which but too apparently was rising among them. These contain my ideas of the principal duties of the inspector's office, and, I have reason to think, are generally agreeable to the army. While I am on this subject, I must do justice to the Baron's intelligence, zeal, and indefatigable industry, from which we have experienced very happy effects."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 18 June, 1778.

cording to circumstances. As yet I am not fully ascertained of the enemy's destination; nor is there wanting a variety of opinions, as to the route they will pursue, whether it will be by land or sea, admitting it to be New York. Some think it probable, in such case, that part of their army, which crossed the Delaware, will march down the Jersey shore some distance, and then embark. There is other intelligence corroborating Mr. Roberts's, but none official is yet come. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

P. S. A letter from Captain McLane, dated in Philadelphia, this minute came to hand, confirming the evacuation.[2]

[1] A council of war was held on the 17th of June, in which the following questions were proposed by the Commander-in-chief, and discussed:

"Whether any enterprise ought to be undertaken against the enemy in their present circumstances? Whether the army should remain in the position it now holds, till the final evacuation of the city, or move immediately towards the Delaware? Whether any detachment of it shall be sent to reinforce the brigade in the Jerseys, or advanced towards the enemy to act as occasion shall require, and endeavor to take advantage of their retreat? If the enemy march through Jersey, will it be prudent to attack them on the way, or more eligible to proceed to the North River in the most direct and convenient manner, to secure the important communication between the eastern and southern States? In case such measures should be adopted, as will enable this army to overtake the enemy in their march, will it be prudent, with the aid which may reasonably be expected from the Jersey militia, to make an attack upon them, and ought it to be a partial or a general one?"

There being a great variety of opinions among the officers, General Washington requested each one to communicate his views in writing; which was accordingly done the next day; but not till the decided movements of the enemy had made it demonstrable, that they were advancing through Jersey. The main point to be considered, therefore, was the expediency of attacking them on their march. Nearly all the officers were opposed to an attack, on account of the inequality of force, but others thought it should depend on circumstances. This was probably the impression of General Washington, when he put the army in motion to cross the Delaware.

[2] Read in Congress, June 20th. Referred to the Committee of Intelligence.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, six o'clock, P. M.,
18 June, 1778.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing you this forenoon, I have received your letter of the 17th, with its several enclosures. I am happy in the approbation of Congress respecting my conduct to Dr. Ferguson. I could not find, after the maturest consideration on the subject, that his passage through the country could be in any wise material, or answer any other purpose than to spread disaffection.

I shall take every measure in my power to prevent an intercourse between the army and the enemy, and also between the inhabitants and the latter. You may rest assured, that whatever letters come from their lines shall be, as they ever have been, minutely inspected; and whenever they import any thing of an insidious cast, they shall be suppressed. In this I trust I shall not offend against any rule of right, nor the strictest propriety. The letter for the commissioners I shall transmit by any earliest opportunity; however, their departure from Philadelphia will prevent their getting it as soon as they otherwise would have done. I cannot say that I regret the delay; for there is no knowing to what acts of depredation and ruin their disappointed ambition might have led. And permit me to add, that I think there was no other criterion for Congress to go by, than the one they have adopted. The proceedings of the 22d of April, it is probable, have reached Britain by this time, and

will show that the present powers of the commissioners, or at least those we are obliged to suppose them to possess, are wholly incompetent to any valuable end.

I have appointed General Arnold to command in Philadelphia, as the state of his wound will not permit his services in a more active line. Colonel Jackson,[1] with a detachment of troops, is to attend him; and I flatter myself that order will be preserved, and the several purposes answered, expressed by Congress in their resolution of the 4th instant.[2] The General set out this evening, and I myself shall move with the main body of the army at five in the morning to-morrow.[3] I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] Henry Jackson, of the Massachusetts line.

[2] The object of this resolve was to protect the inhabitants of Philadelphia from suffering any insult or injury to their property or persons after the evacuation. It was required, that no transfers, removals, or sales of goods or merchandise in the possession of the inhabitants should be allowed, till it should be ascertained by a joint committee, appointed by Congress and the government of Pennsylvania, whether any of them belonged to the king of Great Britain or his subjects.

[3] "You are immediately to proceed to Philadelphia and take the command of the troops there. The principal objects of your command you will find specified in the enclosed resolve of Congress of the 4th instant, which you will carefully execute. You will take every prudent step in your power to preserve tranquillity and order in the city, and give security to individuals of every class and description, restraining as far as possible, till the restoration of civil government, every species of persecution, insult, or abuse, either from the soldiery to the inhabitants, or among each other. I leave it to your own discretion to adopt such measures as shall appear to you the most effectual, and at the same time least offensive, for answering the views of Congress, to prevent the removal, transfer, or sale of any goods, wares, or merchandise, in possession of the inhabitants of the city, till the property of them can be ascertained in the mode directed.

"The quartermaster-general will send one of his assistants into the city, who will take your directions and give you all the aid in his power. He is to search out any public stores belonging to the enemy, and convert them to the use of the army."—*Washington to Major-General Arnold*, 19 June, 1778.

P. S. By this conveyance you will be pleased to receive the proceedings of the court of inquiry, respecting the losses of the forts in the Highlands.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

Four o'clock 20 June, 1778.

SIR,

I think it necessary to inform you by the return of the express, who brought your packet for Congress, that I am now with the main body of the army within ten miles of Coryell's Ferry.[2] General Lee is advanced with six brigades, and will cross to-night or to-morrow morning.[3] By the last intelligence the enemy were near Mount Holly, and moving very slowly; but, as there are so many roads open to them, their route could not be ascertained. I shall enter the Jerseys to-morrow, and give you the earliest notice of their movements and whatever may affect you. As the supplies of forage and provision in your

[1] Read in Congress, June 20th.

[2] Washington arrived at Coryell's Ferry at noon on the 21st. He crossed the river at about 3 o'clock. "Rain prevented our marching so early this morning as I intended [4 o'clock]; the succeeding heat and badness of roads rendered it impossible for the army to advance any further than the other side of Coryell's Ferry."—*Washington to Major-General Dickinson*, 21 June, 1778.

[3] "You are to proceed with the first and second Pennsylvania regiments, and the brigade late Conway's, by the direct route to Coryell's Ferry, leaving a proper interval between your division and General Lee's, so as to prevent their interfering with each other. The instructions given to General Lee, are to halt on the first strong ground after passing the Delaware at the said ferry, until further orders; unless he should receive authentic intelligence, that the enemy have proceeded by the direct road to South Amboy, (or still lower); in this case he is to continue his march to the North River."—*Washington to Brigadier-General Wayne*, 18 June, 1778.

quarter will be objects of the utmost importance, they will therefore claim your attention. I am, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARNOLD.

Ten Miles from Coryell's, 21 June, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

This will be delivered you by Major Wemp, who has the conduct and care of some warriors from the Seneca nations, who are also accompanied by a few of our Oneida and Tuscarora friends. The enclosed extract of a letter from our Indian commissioners at Albany will inform you of the Senecas' business in this quarter. I cannot give them the smallest account of Astyarix,[1] of whom they are in pursuit, nor did I ever hear of his captivity, till I was advised of it a few days ago by General Schuyler. They have been treated with civility; but at the same time I told them of their hostilities, and that as soon as the British army were gone, if they did not immediately cease them, I would turn our whole force against them and the other Indian nations, who have taken a like bloody part against us, and cut them to pieces. They have also had a view of the main body of the army, and have been told of our great resources of men and number of troops elsewhere. I hope this circumstance, with the evacuation of Philadelphia and their own evidence of it, added to our civilities and some presents, will have a happy effect upon the temper and disposition of their nation when they return. I wish you

[1] A warrior taken prisoner on the frontiers of Virginia.

to order them such trinkets, &c as., you may judge necessary, keeping up however a distinction between them and the Oneidas and Tuscaroras, who are our friends. I would have the favors and presents to these greatly to exceed.

Major Wemp has despatches from the Sachems for all the warriors, and the men here before, to return home immediately. Such as remained, I believe are with Monsieur Tousard. I shall be glad that you will have them collected, and have them all well *presented*, after which they may return to their nation, in obedience to their Sachems' orders, if they incline. I have given the Senecas a letter to Congress respecting Astyarix's releasement, if he can be found.

I received your favor yesterday. If Morgan's corps could have been on the rear of the enemy, they might have harassed them, but not without considerable risk. They are now advancing, as the whole army is, to the Delaware. We have been much impeded by the rain. The troops with General Lee crossed the river last night.[1] I am, in haste, dear Sir, &c. You will be pleased to give the necessary orders for their being supplied with provisions while in Phila., & on their way to Congress.

[1] "When we came to Hopewell Township, the General unluckily called a council of war, the result of which would have done honor to the most honorable society of midwives, and to them only. The purport was, that we should keep at a comfortable distance from the enemy, and keep up a vain parade of annoying them by detachment. In pursuance of this idea, a detachment of 1500 men was sent off under General Scott to join the other troops near the enemy's lines. General Lee was *primum mobile* of this sage plan; and was even opposed to sending so considerable a force. The General, on mature reconsideration of what had been resolved on, determined to pursue a different line of conduct at all hazards."—*Hamilton to Boudinot*, 5 July, 1778.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, near Coryell's
22 June, 1778.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you that I am now in Jersey, and that the troops are passing the river at Coryell's, and are mostly over. The latest intelligence I have had respecting the enemy was yesterday from General Dickinson. He says they were in the morning at Morestown and Mount Holly; but that he had not been able to learn what route they would pursue from thence; nor was it easy to determine, as, from their then situation, they might either proceed to South Amboy, or by way of Brunswic. We have been a good deal impeded in our march by rainy weather. As soon as we have cleaned the arms, and can get matters in train, we propose moving towards Princeton, in order to avail ourselves of any favorable occasions, that may present themselves, of attacking the enemy. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

You are immediately to proceed with the detachment commanded by Genl. Poor, and form a junction as expeditiously as possible with that under the command of Genl. Scott. You are to use the most effectual means for gaining the enemy's left flank and rear, and giving them every degree of annoyance. All Continental parties, that are already on the lines, will be under your command, and you will take such measures, in concert with Genl. Dickinson, as will cause the enemy the greatest impediment and

loss in their march. For these purposes you will attack them as occasion may require by detachment, and, if a proper opening shd. be given, by operating against them with the whole force of your command. You will naturally take such precautions, as will secure you against surprise, and maintain your communication with this army. Given at Kingston, this 25th day of June, 1778.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

CRANBERRY, 26 June, 1778.[2]

DEAR SIR,

Your uneasiness on account of the command of yesterday's detachment fills me with concern, as it is not in my power fully to remove it without wounding the feelings of the Marquis de Lafayette. I have thought of an expedient, which, though not quite equal to either of your views, may in some measure answer both; and that is to make another detachment from this army for the purpose of aiding and supporting the several detachments now under the command of the Marquis & giving you the command

[1] On the morning of the 23d, Washington marched to "Hopewell Township, near the Baptist Meeting," where he located his headquarters. He had expected to be nearer Princeton, but the enemy moved more slowly than he had expected, and he was uncertain of their intentions. He called upon Major-General Dickinson for guides, and described the detachments harassing the enemy as follows: "Morgan's corps is to gain the enemy's right flank; Maxwell's brigade to hang on their left; Brigadier General Scott is now marching with a very respectable detachment destined to gall the enemy's left flank and rear," while Cadwalader, with some Continental troops and volunteers, had crossed the Delaware and was marching to the enemy's rear.—*To Dickinson*, 24 June, 1778.

He dated a letter to General Dickinson "John Hunt's, near the Baptist Meeting House, 24 June, 1778, ½ after 4 A.M."

[2] Washington arrived at Cranberry, with the head of the line, shortly after 9 o'clock, A.M.

of the whole, under certain restrictions; which circumstances arising from your own conduct yesterday render almost unavoidable.[1]

The expedient I would propose, is, for you to

[1] Lee had in something of a pet, refused the command of the detachment sent against the left flank and rear of the enemy, deeming it "as a more proper business of a young, volunteering general, than of the second in command in the army." So Lafayette was given the appointment, and had proceeded to carry out the instructions of the Commander-in-chief, when Lee, urged by his friends and hearing that Lord Sterling was advancing his pretensions to command, suddenly altered his mind, and asked for the command.—*Lee to Washington*, 25 June, 1778. Upon learning of the dilemma in which this act of Lee placed Washington, the Marquis gracefully yielded: "I want to repeat to you in writing, what I have told to you, which is, that, if you believe it, or if it is believed necessary or useful to the good of the service and the honor of General Lee to send him down with a couple of thousand men, or any greater force; I will cheerfully obey and serve him, not only out of duty, but out of what I owe to that gentleman's character."—*Lafayette to Washington*, 26 June, 1778.

"General Lee's uneasiness on account of yesterday's transaction rather increasing than abating, and your politeness in wishing to ease him of it, has induced me to detach him from this army with a part of it, to reinforce or at least cover the several detachments at present under your command. At the same time that I felt for General Lee's distress of mind, I have had an eye to your wishes, and the delicacy of your situation; and have therefore obtained a promise from him, that, when he gives you notice of his approach and command, he will request you to prosecute any plan you may have already concerted for the purpose of attacking or otherwise annoying the enemy. This is the only expedient I could think of to answer both your views. General Lee seems satisfied with the measure, and I wish it may prove agreeable to you, as I am, with the warmest wishes for your honor & glory, and with the sincerest esteem and affection, yours, &c."—*Washington to Lafayette*, 26 June, 1778.

"I must repeat again my wish that you do not push on with too much rapidity. You may be, in case of action, at too great a distance to receive succor and exposed from thence to great hazard. The troops here are suffering for want of provision, as well as those with you, and are under the necessity of halting till they are refreshed. Had this unfortunate circumstance not intervened, the severe rain now falling would compel 'em to delay their march for the present."—*Washington to Lafayette*, 26 June, 1778. The Marquis being at Robin's tavern, eight miles from Allentown, on a road other than that on which Washington was moving, he was ordered to Englishtown about seven miles from Monmouth Court-House. Washington himself reached Englishtown on the 27th.

march towards the Marquis with Scott's and Varnum's brigades. Give him notice, that you are advancing to support him, and that you are to have the command of the whole advanced body; but, as he may have formed some enterprise with the advice of the officers commanding the several corps under his command, which will not admit of delay or alteration, you will desire him to proceed as if no change had happened and you will give him every assistance and countenance in your power. This, as I observed before, is not quite the thing; but may possibly answer, in some degree, the views of both. That it may do so, and the public service receive benefit from the measure, is the sincere wish of, dr. Sir, yr. most obedient servant.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

ENGLISHTOWN,[1] half after eleven, A.M.,
28 June, 1778.

SIR,

I was duly honored with your favor of the 20th instant, with the report to which it referred, and trust my situation will apologize for my not answering it before. I am now here with the main body of the army, and pressing hard to come up with the enemy. They encamped yesterday at Monmouth Court-House, having almost the whole of their front, particularly their left wing, secured by a marsh and thick wood, and their rear by a difficult defile, from whence they moved very early this morning. Our advance, from the rainy weather, and the intense heat when it

[1] The draft reads "Englishtown, six miles from Monmouth Court House."

was fair, (though these may have been equally disadvantageous to them,) has been greatly delayed. Several of our men have fallen sick from these causes; and a few unfortunately have fainted, and died in a little time after.

We have a select and strong detachment more forward, under the command of Major-General Lee, with orders to attack their rear if possible. Whether the detachment will be able to come up with it, is a matter of question, especially before they get into strong grounds. Besides this, Morgan, with his corps, and some bodies of militia, are on their flanks. I cannot determine yet at what place they intend to embark. Some think they will push for Sandy Hook, whilst others suppose they mean to go to Shoal Harbor. The latter opinion seems to be founded in the greater probability, as, from intelligence, several vessels and craft are lying off that place.[1] We have made a few prisoners; and they have lost a good many men by desertion. I cannot ascertain their number, as they came in to our advanced parties, and pushed immediately into the country. I think five or six hundred is the least number that have come in, in the whole. They are chiefly foreigners.[2]

I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] When Sir Henry Clinton left Philadelphia, it was his purpose, if circumstances would admit, to march directly to Brunswick and embark his troops on the Raritan River. Till he arrived at Crosswicks and Allentown, his march was in that direction, although equally in a line to Sandy Hook. At this point it was necessary for him to determine which route to pursue, and he chose the latter, as he was informed that General Washington had crossed the Delaware with his whole army, and was stationed on the line to Brunswick.

[2] A letter to General Dickinson was dated, "Headquarters, Fairfield Township, near Monmouth Court House, 29 June, 1778, 6 o'clock P.M.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

ENGLISHTOWN, 1 July, 1778.

SIR,

I embrace this first moment of leisure to give Congress a more full and particular account of the movements of the army under my command since its passing the Delaware, than the situation of our affairs would heretofore permit.

I had the honor to advise them, that, on the appearances of the enemy's intention to march through Jersey becoming serious, I had detached General Maxwell's brigade, in conjunction with the militia of that State, to interrupt and impede their progress by every obstruction in their power, so as to give time to the army under my command to come up with them, and take advantage of any favorable circumstances that might present themselves. The army having proceeded to Coryell's Ferry, and crossed the Delaware at that place, I immediately detached Colonel Morgan with a select corps of six hundred men to reinforce General Maxwell, and marched with the main body towards Princeton.

The slow advance of the enemy had greatly the air of design, and led me, with others, to suspect that General Clinton, desirous of a general action, was endeavoring to draw us down into the lower country, in order, by a rapid movement, to gain our right, and take possession of the strong grounds above us. This consideration, and to give the troops time to repose and refresh themselves from the fatigues they had experienced from rainy and exces-

sively hot weather, determined me to halt at Hopewell township, about five miles from Princeton, where we remained till the morning of the 25th. On the preceding day I made a second detachment of fifteen hundred chosen troops under Brigadier-General Scott, to reinforce those already in the vicinity of the enemy, the more effectually to annoy and delay their march. The next day the army moved to Kingston ; and, having received intelligence that the enemy were prosecuting their route toward Monmouth Court-House, I despatched a thousand select men under Brigadier-General Wayne, and sent Marquis de Lafayette to take the command of the whole advanced corps, including Maxwell's brigade and Morgan's light-infantry, with orders to take the first fair opportunity of attacking the enemy's rear.

In the evening of the same day the whole army marched from Kingston, where our baggage was left, with intention to preserve a proper distance for supporting the advanced corps, and arrived at Cranberry early the next morning. The intense heat of the weather, and a heavy storm unluckily coming on, made it impossible to resume our march that day without great inconvenience and injury to the troops. Our advanced corps, being indifferently circumstanced, moved from the position it had held the night before, and took post in the evening on the Monmouth road about five miles from the enemy's rear, in expectation of attacking them next morning on their march. The main body having remained at Cranberry, the advanced corps was found to be too

remote, and too far upon the right to be supported either in case of an attack upon or from the enemy; which induced me to send orders to the Marquis to file off by his left towards Englishtown, which he accordingly executed early in the morning of the 27th.

The enemy, in marching from Allentown, had changed their disposition, and placed their best troops in the rear, consisting of all the grenadiers, light-infantry, and chasseurs of the line. This alteration made it necessary to increase the number of our advanced corps; in consequence of which I detached Major-General Lee with two brigades to join the Marquis at Englishtown, on whom of course the command of the whole devolved, amounting to about five thousand men. The main body marched the same day, and encamped within three miles of that place. Morgan's corps was left hovering on the enemy's right flank; and the Jersey militia, amounting at this time to about seven or eight hundred men, under General Dickinson, on their left.

The enemy were now encamped in a strong position, with their right extending about a mile and a half beyond the Court-House in the parting of the roads leading to Shrewsbury and Middletown, and their left along the road from Allentown to Monmouth, about three miles on this side the Court-House. Their right flank lay on the skirt of a small wood, while their left was secured by a very thick one, a morass running towards their rear, and their whole front covered by a wood, and, for a considera-

ble extent towards the left, with a morass. In this situation they halted till the morning of the 28th.

Matters being thus situated, and having had the best information, that, if the enemy were once arrived at the Heights of Middletown, ten or twelve miles from where they were, it would be impossible to attempt any thing against them with a prospect of success, I determined to attack their rear the moment they should get in motion from their present ground. I communicated my intention to General Lee, and ordered him to make his disposition for the attack, and to keep his troops constantly lying upon their arms, to be in readiness at the shortest notice. This was done with respect to the troops under my immediate command.

About five in the morning General Dickinson sent an express, informing that the front of the enemy had begun their march. I instantly put the army in motion, and sent orders by one of my aids to General Lee to move on and attack them, unless there should be very powerful reasons to the contrary, acquainting him at the same time, that I was marching to support him, and, for doing it with the greater expedition and convenience, should make the men disencumber themselves of their packs and blankets.

After marching about five miles, to my great surprise and mortification, I met the whole advanced corps retreating, and, as I was told, by General Lee's orders, without having made any opposition, except one fire, given by a party under the command of Colonel Butler, on their being charged by the enemy's

cavalry, who were repulsed. I proceeded immediately to the rear of the corps, which I found closely pressed by the enemy, and gave directions for forming part of the retreating troops, who, by the brave and spirited conduct of the officers, aided by some pieces of well-served artillery, checked the enemy's advance, and gave time to make a disposition of the left wing and second line of the army upon an eminence, and in a wood a little in the rear, covered by a morass in front. On this were placed some batteries of cannon by Lord Sterling, who commanded the left wing, which played upon the enemy with great effect, and, seconded by parties of infantry detached to oppose them, effectually put a stop to their advance.

General Lee being detached with the advanced corps, the command of the right wing, for the occasion, was given to General Greene. For the expedition of the march, and to counteract any attempt to turn our right, I had ordered him to file off by the new church, two miles from Englishtown, and fall into the Monmouth road, a small distance in the rear of the Court-House. On intelligence of the retreat, he marched up and took a very advantageous position on the right.

The enemy by this time, finding themselves warmly opposed in front, made an attempt to turn our left flank; but they were bravely repulsed and driven back by detached parties of infantry. They also made a movement to our right with as little success, General Greene having advanced a body of troops

with artillery to a commanding piece of ground; which not only disappointed their design of turning our right, but severely enfiladed those in front of the left wing. In addition to this, General Wayne advanced with a body of troops, and kept up so severe and well-directed a fire, that the enemy were soon compelled to retire behind the defile where the first stand in the beginning of the action had been made.

In this situation the enemy had both their flanks secured by thick woods and morassses, while their front could only be approached thro' a narrow pass. I resolved nevertheless to attack them; and for that purpose ordered General Poor, with his own and the Carolina brigade to move round upon their right and General Woodford upon their left, and the artillery to gall them in front. But the impediments in their way prevented their getting within reach before it was dark. They remained upon the ground they had been directed to occupy during the night, with the intention to begin the attack early the next morning; and the army continued lying upon their arms in the field of action, to be in readiness to support them. In the mean time the enemy were employed in removing their wounded, and about twelve o'clock at night marched away in such silence, that, tho' General Poor lay extremely near them, they effected their retreat without his knowledge. They carried off all their wounded, except four officers and about forty privates, whose wounds were too dangerous to permit their removal.

The extreme heat of the weather, the fatigue of

the men from their march through a deep sandy country almost entirely destitute of water, and the distance the enemy had gained by marching in the night, made a pursuit impracticable and fruitless. It would have answered no valuable purpose, and would have been fatal to numbers of our men, several of whom died the preceding day with heat.

Were I to conclude my account of this day's transactions, without expressing my obligations to the officers of the army in general, I should do injustice to their merit, and violence to my own feelings. They seemed to vie with each other in manifesting their zeal and bravery. The catalogue of those, who distinguished themselves, is too long to admit of particularizing individuals. I cannot, however, forbear mentioning Brigadier-General Wayne, whose good conduct and bravery thro' the whole action deserves particular commendation.

The behavior of the troops in general, after they recovered from the first surprise occasioned by the retreat of the advanced corps, was such as could not be surpassed.

All the artillery, both officers and men, that were engaged, distinguished themselves in a remarkable manner.

Enclosed, Congress will be pleased to receive a return of our killed, wounded, and missing. Among the first were Lieutenant-Colonel Bunner of Pennsylvania, and Major Dickinson of Virginia, both officers of distinguished merit, and much to be regretted. The enemy's slain, left on the field, and buried by us,

according to the return by the persons assigned to that duty, were four officers and two hundred and forty-five privates. In the former number was the honorable Colonel Monckton. Exclusive of these, they buried some themselves, as there were several new graves near the field of battle. How many men they may have had wounded cannot be determined; but, from the usual proportion, the number must have been considerable. There were a few prisoners taken.

The peculiar situation of General Lee at this time requires that I should say nothing of his conduct. He is now in arrest. The charges against him, with such sentence as the court-martial may decree in his case, shall be transmitted for the approbation or disapprobation of Congress, as soon as it shall have passed.

Being fully convinced by the gentlemen of this country, that the enemy cannot be hurt or injured in their embarkation at Sandy Hook, the place to which they are going, and unwilling to get too far removed from the North River, I put the troops in motion early this morning, and shall proceed that way, leaving the Jersey brigade, Morgan's corps, and other light parties (the militia being all dismissed) to hover about them, countenance desertion, and to prevent depredations as far as possible. After they embark, the former will take post in the neighborhood of Elizabethtown, the latter rejoin the corps from which they were detached. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] "I have seen the General much embarrassed this day, on the subject of those who distinguished themselves in the battle of Monmouth. To name a

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

BRUNSWIC, 3 July, 1778.

SIR,

My last to you was on the 29th of June.

I have the pleasure to inform you that the loss of the enemy in the action of the 28th was more considerable than we at first apprehended. By the return of the officers, who had charge of the burying parties, it appears that they left two hundred and forty-five non-commissioned officers and privates dead on the field, and four officers, one of whom was the honorable Colonel Monckton of the grenadiers. Our loss was seven officers and fifty-two rank and file killed, and seventeen officers and one hundred and

few, and be silent with regard to many of equal merit would be an injustice to the latter; to pass the whole over unnoticed would be an unpardonable slight; indiscriminate praise of the whole would be an unfair distribution of rewards; and yet, when men generally conducted themselves so well as our officers did, this matter is allowable and is eligible, because least liable to give offence. The merit of restoring the day, is due to the General; and his conduct was such throughout the affair as has greatly increased my love and esteem for him."—*Col. John Laurens to Henry Laurens*, 2 July, 1778. "I never saw the General to so much advantage. He instantly took measures for checking the enemy's advance, and giving time to the army, which was very near, to form and make a proper disposition. He then rode back and had the troops formed on a very advantageous piece of ground . . . America owes a great deal to General Washington for this day's work. A general rout, dismay and disgrace would have attended the whole army in any other hands but his. By his own good sense and fortitude, he turned the fate of the day. Other officers have great merit in performing their parts well; but he directed the whole with the skill of a master workman. He did not hug himself at a distance, and leave an Arnold to win laurels for him; but by his own presence he brought order out of confusion, animated his troops, and led them to success."—*Hamilton to Boudinot*, 5 July, 1778. "The general I always revered and loved ever since I knew him, but in this instance he rose superior to himself. Every lip dwells on his praise, for even his pretended friends (for none dare to acknowledge themselves his enemies) are obliged to croak it forth."—*Boudinot to Hamilton*, 8 July, 1778.

twenty rank and file wounded. Among the former were Lieutenant-Colonel Bunner[1] of Pennsylvania and Major Dickinson[2] of Virginia, who were the only officers of rank. There were several fresh graves and burying holes found near the field, in which the enemy put their dead before they quitted it. These were exclusive of the two hundred and forty-five before mentioned. We have made upwards of one hundred prisoners, including forty privates and four officers left wounded at Monmouth Court-House. The number of their wounded we can only guess at, as they were employed in carrying them off during the action and till midnight, when they stole off as silent as the grave. Finding that the enemy had during the action pushed their baggage to Middletown, and that they, by marching off in the night after the engagement, would gain that place before there was any possibility of overtaking their rear, I determined to give over the pursuit. From the information of General Forman, and many gentlemen well acquainted with the country, I found it would be impossible to annoy them in their embarkation, as the neck of land, upon which they now are, is defended by a narrow passage, which being possessed by a few men would effectually oppose our whole force. Besides this consideration, I thought it highly expedient to turn towards the North River. I

[1] Rudolph Bunner.

[2] Major Edmund B. Dickinson, who "ought much to be regretted by his friends and countrymen. He possessed every qualification to render him eminent in the military line. Capt. Fauntleroy of the 5th, was unfortunately killed by a random cannon ball."—*Washington to Governor Henry*, 4 July, 1778.

marched from Englishtown on the 30th of last month, and arrived here yesterday with the whole army, except Maxwell's brigade and Morgan's corps, who are left upon the rear of the enemy to prevent their making depredations, and to encourage desertions, which still prevail to a considerable degree.[1]

The march from Englishtown was inconceivably distressing to the troops and horses. The distance is about twenty miles through a deep sand without a drop of water, except at South River, which is half way. This, added to the intense heat, killed a few and knocked up many of our men, and killed a number of our horses. To recruit the former upon the airy, open grounds near this place, and to give the quartermaster-general an opportunity of providing the latter, will occasion a short halt, but you may depend that we will be with you as soon as possible. My present intention is to cross the North River at King's Ferry; but, should you be of opinion, that it will be in the power of the enemy to hinder our passage, be pleased to inform me, as it would be losing much time to be obliged to turn up from thence, and march through the Clove. The route by King's Ferry is so much the shortest and best, that if the passage could be kept open by throwing up works and mounting some cannon upon them, I think it would be worth while having it done. But this I leave to your determination. I am, &c.

[1] By an official return from General Arnold, dated the 4th of July, the number of deserters, who had then arrived in Philadelphia during the march of the enemy through Jersey, was five hundred and seventy-six. Of these one hundred and thirty-six were British, and four hundred and forty German troops. On the 8th of July the number was increased to above six hundred.

TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

BRUNSWIC, IN NEW JERSEY, 4 July, 1778.

DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter of the 20th ulto. came to my hands last night.

Before this will have reached you, the account of the battle of Monmouth will probably get to Virginia; which, from an unfortunate and bad beginning, turned out a glorious and happy day. The enemy evacuated Philadelphia on the 18th instant. At ten o'clock that day I got intelligence of it, and by two o'clock, or soon after, had six brigades on their march for the Jerseys, and followed with the whole army next morning. On the 21st we completed our passage over the Delaware at Coryell's Ferry, (about thirty-three miles above Philadelphia,) and distant from Valley Forge near forty miles. From this ferry we moved down towards the enemy, and on the 27th got within six miles of them.

General Lee, having the command of the van of the army, consisting of full five thousand chosen men, was ordered to begin the attack next morning, so soon as the enemy began their march; to be supported by me; but, strange to tell! when he came up with the enemy, a retreat commenced; whether by his order, or from other causes, is now the subject of inquiry, and consequently improper to be descanted upon, as he is in arrest, and a court-martial sitting for trial of him. A retreat, however, was the fact, be the causes as they may; and the disorder arising from it would have proved fatal to the army, had not that bountiful Providence, which has never failed us

in the hour of distress, enabled me to form a regiment or two (of those that were retreating) in the face of the enemy and under their fire; by which means a stand was made long enough (the place through which the enemy were pursuing being narrow, to form the troops, that were advancing upon an advantageous piece of ground in the rear. Here our affairs took a favorable turn, and, from being pursued, we drove the enemy back over the ground they had followed, and recovered the field of battle, and possessed ourselves of their dead. But as they retreated behind a morass very difficult to pass, and had both flanks secured with thick woods, it was found impracticable with our men, fainting with fatigue, heat, and want of water, to do any thing more that night. In the morning we expected to renew the action; when, behold, the enemy had stole off as silent as the grave in the night, after having sent away their wounded. Getting a night's march of us, and having but ten miles to a strong post, it was judged inexpedient to follow them any further, but move towards the North River, lest they should have any design upon our posts there.

We buried 245 of their dead on the field of action; they buried several themselves, and many have been since found in the woods, where, during the action, they had drawn them to, and hid them. We have taken five officers and upwards of one hundred prisoners, but the amount of their wounded we have not learnt with any certainty; according to the common proportion of four or five to one, there should

be at least a thousand or 1200. Without exaggeration, their trip through the Jerseys, in killed, wounded, prisoners, and deserters, has cost them at least 2000 men of their best troops. We had 60 men killed, 132 wounded, and about 130 missing, some of whom I suppose may yet come in. Among our slain officers is Major Dickinson and Captain Fauntleroy, two very valuable ones.

I observe what you say concerning voluntary enlistments, or rather your scheme for raising two thousand volunteers; and candidly own to you, I have no opinion of it. These measures only tend to burthen the public with a number of officers, without adding one jot to your strength, but greatly to confusion and disorder. If the several States would but fall upon some vigorous measures to fill up their respective regiments, nothing more need be asked of them. But while these are neglected, or in other words ineffectually and feebly attended to, and these succedaniums tried, you never can have an army to be depended upon.

The enemy's whole force marched through the Jerseys, (that were able) excepting the regiment of Anspach, which, it is said, they were afraid to trust, and therefore sent them round to New York by water, along with the commissioners. I do not learn that they have received much of a reinforcement as yet; nor do I think they have much prospect of any worth speaking of, as I believe they stand very critically with respect to France. As the post waits, I shall only add my love to my sister and the family,

and strong assurances of being, with the sincerest regard and love, your most affectionate brother.

Mr. Ballendine's letter shall be sent to New York by the first flag. I am now moving on towards the North River.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LORD STIRLING AND THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COURT-MARTIAL FOR THE TRIAL OF MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

7 July, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

On further consideration of the adjournment of the court-martial to Morristown, it appears to me, that the matter is liable to many great and almost insuperable objections. Should the court remain there, it would be necessary for more officers to be drawn directly from the army, than could be prudently spared; and the frequent occasions there will be of calling on the same witnesses on several, and often on the same points in question, would cause such a detention of them as might be very injurious. From these considerations I am induced to change the place of the court's sitting, and to request that they will adjourn from Morristown to Paramus Church, which will be immediately in the route of the army. The court will be pleased to notify General Lee and the witnesses of the removal, in such a way as they shall deem most proper. I am, &c.[1]

[1] Lord Stirling was president of the court-martial for the trial of General Lee. The court met at Brunswick on the 4th of July, and continued sitting nearly every day till the 12th of August, when it was closed. It moved with the army, and convened successively at Brunswick, Paramus, Peekskill, and Northcastle.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

CAMP, NEAR BRUNSWIC, 7 July, 1778.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you, that, on Sunday morning, the left wing of the army moved towards the North River; the right followed yesterday; and the second line, which forms the rear division, is also now in motion. I shall advance as fast as I can consistently with the circumstances of the weather and health of the troops.

The enemy, from the advices of our parties of observation, were nearly if not all embarked yesterday. They have continued to desert upon all occasions.

I should be extremely happy if the committee appointed to arrange the army would repair to it as soon as possible. Congress can form no adequate idea of the discontents prevailing on account of the unsettled state of rank, and the uncertainty in which officers are, as to their future situation. The variety of hands in which the power of granting commissions and filling up vacancies is lodged, and other circumstances, have occasioned frequent instances of younger officers commanding their seniors, from the former having received their commissions, and the latter not; and these not only in the line of the army at large, but in their own brigades, and even in their own regiments. This, it will be readily conceived is necessarily productive of much confusion, altercation, and complaint, and requires the speediest remedy. I have the honor, &c.

P. S. By accounts from Monmouth, more of the

enemy's dead have been found. It is said the number buried by us and the inhabitants exceeds three hundred.[1]

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PARAMUS, 11 July, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

The first division of the army moved from hence this morning about four miles, to give room to the second; they will reach Kakiate to-morrow evening, and the North River the next day. I shall halt the remainder hereabouts a few days to refresh the men.[2] I am yet undetermined as to the expediency of throwing the army immediately over the North River. I will state my reasons for hesitating, and shall beg to hear your sentiments upon the matter.

Upon conversing with the Quarter Master and Commissary General and Commissary of Forage upon the prospect of supplies, they all agree that the army can be much more easily subsisted upon the west, than upon the east, side of the river. The country on this side is more plentiful in regard to forage; and flour, which is the article we shall be most likely to

[1] Read in Congress, July 9th.

[2] "The left wing of the army is advanced four miles from this place, and nineteen miles from King's Ferry: the other two divisions are moving after it, with proper intervals. The enemy, since quitting the Jerseys, have encamped in three divisions on Staten Island, New York Island and Long Island. It does not appear to be their design, or even practicable for them immediately, to commence any offensive operations. This consideration, added to the intense heat of the weather, determines me to move very leisurely, and spare the troops as much as possible."—*Washington to Major-General Arnold*, 11 July, 1778.

be distressed for, coming from the southward, will will have a shorter transportation, and consequently the supply more easily kept up. We are besides in a country devoted to the enemy, and gleaning it take so much from them. Was this the only point to be determined, there would not remain a moment's doubt; but the principal matter to be considered is (upon a supposition that the enemy mean to operate up the North River) whether the army, being all, or part upon this side, can afford a sufficient aud timely support to the posts, should they put such a design in execution. Upon this point then, Sir, I request your full and candid opinion. You are well acquainted with the condition of the posts, and know what opposition they are at present capable of making when sufficiently manned, which ought in my opinion to be immediately done. After that, you will please to take into consideration whether any and what advantages may be derived from the army's being upon the east side of the river, and if there, what position would be most eligible. The neighborhood of the White Plains, after leaving sufficient garrisons in our Rear, strikes me at present. We know the strength of the Ground, and we cover a considerable extent of country, and draw the forage which would otherwise fall into the hands of the enemy.

In forming your opinion, be pleased to advert to the necessity of keeping our force pretty much collected, for which side soever you may determine. For should the enemy find us disjointed, they may throw the whole of theirs upon part of ours, and, by their

shipping, keep us from making a junction. In determining the above, you are to take it for granted that we can, should it be deemed most expedient, support the army upon the east, tho' it will be with infinitely more difficulty than upon the west side of the river. By the latest accounts from New York, it does not seem probable that the enemy will operate suddenly; they have been much harassed and deranged by their march thro' Jersey, and are at present encamped upon Long, Staten and York Islands. We have this day a rumor that a French fleet has been seen off the coast and that the English is preparing to sail from New York in pursuit of them. But it is but a rumor. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

CAMP, AT PARAMUS, 12 July, 1778.

SIR,

On Friday evening I had the honor to receive your letter of the 7th inst., with its inclosures.

The vote of approbation and thanks, which Congress have been pleased to honor me with, gives me the highest satisfaction, and at the same time demands a return of my sincerest acknowledgments.[1]

[1] "Resolved, unanimously, that the thanks of Congress be given to General Washington for the activity with which he marched from the camp at Valley Forge in pursuit of the enemy; for his distinguished exertions in forming the line of battle; and for his great good conduct in leading on the attack and gaining the important victory of Monmouth over the British grand army, under the command of General Sir Henry Clinton, in their march from Philadelphia to New York."—*Journals*, July 7th.

The other resolution I communicated with great pleasure to the army at large in yesterday's orders.

The left wing of the army, which advanced yesterday four miles beyond this, moved this morning on the route towards King's Ferry. The right and second line, which make the last division, are now here, where they will halt for a day or two, or perhaps longer, if no circumstances of a pressing nature cast up, in order to refresh themselves from the great fatigues they have suffered from the intense heat of the weather.

We have had it reported for two or three days thro' several channels from New York, that there is a French fleet on the coast; and it is added, that the enemy have been manning with the utmost despatch several of their ships of war which were there, and have pushed them out to sea. How far these facts are true, I cannot determine; but I should think it of infinite importance to ascertain the first, if possible, by sending out swift-sailing cruisers. The most interesting advantages might follow the information. I will try, by every practicable means that I can devise, to obtain an accurate account of the enemy's fleet at New York.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, July 15th.

This fleet sailed from Toulon on the 12th of April, but did not reach Chincoteague till the evening of the 5th of July, the mouth of the Delaware till the 8th of July. It had on board M. Gerard, the French Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States. After ascertaining, that the British had evacuated Philadelphia, and that the shipping had left the Delaware, Count D'Estaing despatched a vessel up the river with the minister on board, and proceeded with the fleet to Sandy Hook, where he arrived on the 11th of July.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

SIR, PARAMUS, 14 July, 1778.

I last night received a letter from Congress, informing me of the arrival of a French fleet on our coast, extracts from which I have the honor to enclose. In addition to that information, I have today received intelligence tolerably authentic of its arrival off the Hook. Every thing we can do to aid and coöperate with this fleet is of the greatest importance. Accounts from New York speak of the Cork fleet, which is momently expected there; for the safety of which the enemy are extremely alarmed. It is probable, that this fleet, to avoid the French fleet, will be directed to take its course through the Sound. If this should be the case, it might answer the most valuable purposes, were the eastern States to collect beforehand all the frigates and armed vessels, which they can get together for the purpose, at some convenient place for interrupting their passage that way. If the whole or any considerable part of the Cork fleet could be taken, or destroyed, it would be a fatal blow to the British army, which it is supposed at this time has but a very small stock of provisions on hand. Should the project I have now suggested appear to you eligible, I beg the favor of you to transmit copies of it, and the enclosed extracts, to the neighboring States, and to endeavor to engage thier concurrence. From the nature of the river, even small armed boats may be useful, as the frigates cannot protect the transports. I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect and esteem, &c.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

CAMP, AT PARAMUS, 14th July, 1778.

SIR,

I take the earliest opportunity to advise you, that I have been informed of your arrival on this coast, with a fleet of Ships under your command, belonging to his Most Christian Majesty, our great ally. I congratulate you, Sir, most sincerely upon this event, and beg leave to assure you of my warmest wishes for your success. The intelligence of your arrival was communicated to me last night by a Letter from the Honble. Mr. Laurens President of the Congress, as you will perceive by the enclosed copy.

With respect to the number or force of the British ships of war in the port of New York, I am so unhappy as not to be able to inform you of either, with the precision I could wish, as they are constantly shifting their stations.[1] It is probable, and I hope it is the case, that your advice on this subject, from some captures you may have made, are more certain than those of Congress, or any I can offer. The number of their transports is reported to be extremely great, and I am persuaded that it is. If possible, I will obtain an accurate state of their Ships of war, which I shall do myself the honor of transmitting to you. Before I conclude, I think it proper to acquaint you, that I am now arrived with the main body of the army, immediately under my command, within

[1] Besides the spies in New York, there were persons stationed in Monmouth County near the Hook, who watched the British shipping, and communicated intelligence to General Washington.

twenty miles of the North or Hudson's River, which I mean to pass as soon as possible, about fifty miles above New York.[1] I shall then move down before the enemy's lines, with a view of giving them every jealousy in my power.[2] And I further think it proper to assure you, that I shall upon every occasion feel the strongest inclination to facilitate such enterprises, as you may form, and are pleased to communicate to me. I would submit it to your consideration, whether it will not be expedient to establish some conventional signals, for the purpose of promoting an easier correspondence between us, & mutual intelligence.

If you deem it expedient, you will be so obliging as to fix upon them with Lieut. Colo. Laurens, one of my aids, who will have the honor of delivering you this, and of giving you satisfaction in many particulars respecting our affairs, and to whom you may safely confide any measures or information you may wish me to be acquainted with.

I have just received advice, that the Enemy are in

[1] "The right wing and second line of the army marched this morning from hence [Paramus], and will be at Haverstraw tomorrow, where I also expect to be at the same time."—*Washington to Major-General Gates*, 14 July, 1778.

[2] "Interest and policy strongly press us to co-operate with & to give every countenance to our friends upon this occasion, and this is the wish of Congress. I therefore think it will be material for you to circulate a report in a *proper way*, that we are on the point of concentring our whole force, and bringing it to act against New York. This will excite the enemy's fears, and aided by such movements and other measures as you may judge advisable to take, may greatly facilitate the Admiral's designs and produce the most beneficial consequences. We should attempt to rouse their jealousy in every quarter and in every shape."—*Washington to Major-General Gates*, 14 July, 1778.

daily expectation of a provision fleet from Cork, and that they are under great apprehensions lest it should fall into your hands. You will also permit me to notice, that there is a navigation to New York from the sea, besides the one between Sandy Hook & Long Island. This lies between the latter and the State of Connecticut, is commonly known by the name of the Sound, and is capable of receiving forty-Gun Ships, tho' the passage within seven miles of the city at a particular place is extremely narrow and difficult.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

CAMP, AT HAVERSTRAW BAY,
17 July, 1778.

SIR,

I had the honor of receiving, the night of the 14th inst., your very obliging and interesting letter of the 13th dated off Sandy Hook, with the duplicate of another, dated the 8th at Sea.[1] The arrival of a

[1] In his first letter, on approaching the coast, Count d'Estaing wrote as follows:

"I have the honor to inform your Excellency of the arrival of the King's fleet, charged by his Majesty with the glorious task of giving his allies, the United States of America, the most striking proofs of his affection. If I can succeed in it, nothing will be wanting to my happiness; and this will be augmented by the consideration of concerting my operations with such a general as your Excellency. The talents and the great actions of General Washington have secured to him, in the eyes of all Europe, the truly sublime title of the liberator of America. Accept, Sir, the homage, which every man, and especially every military man, owes you; and be not displeased that I solicit, even in the first instance of intercourse, with military and naval frankness, a friendship so flattering as yours. I will endeavour to render myself worthy of it by my respectful devotion to your country. It is prescribed to me by my orders, and my heart accords with it."

fleet, belonging to his Most Christian Majesty on our coast, is an event that makes me truly happy; and permit me to observe, that the pleasure I feel on the occasion is greatly increased by the command being placed in a Gentleman of such distinguished talents, experience, and reputation, as the Count d'Estaing. I am fully persuaded, that every possible exertion will be made by you to accomplish the important purposes of your destination; and you may have the firmest reliance, that my most strenuous efforts shall accompany you in any measure, which may be found eligible. I esteem myself highly honored by the desire you express, with a frankness which must always be pleasing, of possessing a place in my friendship. At the same time allow me to assure you, that I shall consider myself peculiarly happy, if I can but improve the prepossessions you are pleased to entertain in my favor, into a cordial and lasting amity.

On the first notice of your arrival, and previous to the receipt of your letter, I wrote to you by Lt. Colo. Laurens, one of my Aids-De-Camp, whom I charged to explain to you such further particulars, as were not contained in my letter, which might be necessary for your information, and to whom it was my wish you should confide your situation, and views, so far as might be proper for my direction in any measures of concert or coöperation, which may be thought advancive of the common cause. Maj. De Chouin, who arrived this day at my quarters, has given me a very full and satisfactory explanation on this head; and in return I have freely communicated to him my

ideas of every matter interesting to our mutual operations. These, I doubt not, he will convey to you, with that perspicuity and intelligence, which he possesses in a manner, that amply justifies the confidence you have reposed in him.[1]

You would have heard from me sooner in answer to your letter, but I have been waiting for Mr. Chouin's arrival to acquaint me with your circumstances and intentions, and, at the same time, have been employed in collecting information with respect to several particulars, the knowledge of which was essential to the formation of our plans. The difficulty of doing justice by letter to matters of such variety and importance, as those which now engage our deliberations, has induced me to send Lt. Colo. Hamilton, another of my aids, to you, in whom I place entire confidence. He will be able to make you perfectly acquainted with my sentiments, and to satisfy any inquiries you may think proper to propose; and I would wish you to consider the information he delivers as coming from myself.

Colo. Hamilton is accompanied by Lt. Colo. Fleury, a gentleman of your nation, who has distinguished himself by his zeal and gallantry in the pres-

[1] Major Chouin had been sent to Congress with despatches by Count d'Estaing. From Congress he hastened immediately to General Washington's camp, as the bearer of the first letter. "I pray you," said Count d'Estaing in the same letter, "to place the most extensive confidence in all this officer shall tell you on my part. He is a near relation of M. de Sartine. This minister has been long known for his attachment to the common cause. It is less the desire of pleasing a statesman, honored with the confidence of the King, which has determined me to send to you M. de Chouin, than an opinion of his military knowledge, the clearness of his ideas, and the precision with which he will communicate mine."

ent war with England. He has also with him four captains of Vessels, whom I hope you will find very useful, from their knowledge of the coast and harbors, and two persons, who have acted a considerable time in the capacity of pilots, and in whose skill, expertness, fidelity, from the recommendations I have had, I believe you may place great dependence. I am still endeavoring to provide others of this description, who shall be despatched to you, as fast as they can be found.

With the most ardent desire for your success, and with the greatest respect & esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

HEAD QUARTERS, HAVERSTRAW,
17th July, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform you of what you have probably heard before this time, That the Admiral Count d'Estaing has arrived upon the Coast, and now lays off Sandy Hook, with a Fleet of twelve Ships of the line and four Frigates belonging to his Most Christian Majesty. The design of this fleet is to coöperate with the American armies in the execution of any plans, which shall be deemed most advancive of our mutual Interests, against the common Enemy. No particular plan is yet adopted, but two seem to present themselves; either an attack upon New York, or Rhode Island. Should the first be found practicable, our forces are very well disposed

for the purpose; but, should the latter be deemed the most eligible, some previous preparations must be made. That we may therefore be ready at all points, and for all events, I desire that you may immediately apply in the most urgent manner, in my name, to the States of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, and make up a Body of five thousand men inclusive of what you already have. Establish suitable magazines of provisions, and make a collection of Boats proper for a descent. I am empowered to call for the militia for the purpose above mentioned, by a Resolve of Congress of the 11th instant. You will not fail to make yourself fully master of the numbers and position of the Enemy by land, and of their Strength by Sea. Should nothing come of this matter, it will answer this valuable purpose, that the Enemy will be distracted and deceived, and will probably be off their guard in respect to the defence of New York, should that ultimately be our real design.

I have it not in my power to be more explicit with you at present; but, should the expedition against Rhode Island be finally determined upon, you may depend upon having every previous and necessary information for your government.

You should engage a number of Pilots well acquainted with the navigation of the harbor of Newport, and of the adjacent Coast, and have them ready to go on Board upon Signals, which will be thrown out by the French admiral, and of which you will be advised. That you may have the earliest intelligence of his arrival, you should establish a Chain of Ex-

presses from some commanding View upon the Coast to your Quarters. I need not recommend perfect secrecy to you, so far as respects any assistance from the French Fleet. Let your preparations carry all the appearance of dependence upon your own strength only. Lest you may think the number of five thousand men too few for the enterprise, I will just hint to you, that there are French Troops on board the fleet, and some will be detached from this army, should there be occasion.[1] I am, &c.

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

[PARAMUS, — July, 1778.

I thank you for your cordial and affectionate congratulations on our late success at Monmouth, and the arrival of the French fleet at the Hook. The first might, I think, have been a glorious day, if matters had begun well in the morning, but, as the court-martial, which has been sitting upward of a month for the trial of General Lee, is not yet over, I do not

[1] In speaking of the expected arrival of the Cork fleet, Washington wrote to Governor Greene on the 18th: "It is probable that this fleet as well as other vessels, to avoid the Count d'Estaing's, will be directed to take its course through the Sound. If this should be the case, it might answer the most valuable intentions, were the eastern States to collect immediately all their frigates and privateers to rendezvous at some convenient place for interrupting their passage that way. Could the whole or any considerable part of this fleet be taken or destroyed, it would be a fatal blow to the British army, which it is supposed at this time has but a small stock of provisions on hand. I would, therefore, beg leave to recommend and urge the matter to your particular consideration, as a thing of the utmost importance to our course at this critical conjuncture, from the proper execution of which we might derive the most solid advantages."

choose to say anything on the subject, further than that there evidently appeared a capital blunder, or something else, somewhere. The truth, it is to be hoped, will come out after so long an investigation of it. If it had not been for the long passage of the French fleet, which prevented their arrival till after the evacuation of Philadelphia—or the shallowness of the water at the entrance of the harbor at New York, which prevented their getting in there—one of the greatest strokes might have been aimed that ever was; and, if successful, which I think would have been reduced to a moral certainty, the ruin of Great Britain must have followed, as both army and fleet must, undoubtedly, have fallen. Count d'Estaing, with his squadron are now at Rhode Island, to which place I have detached troops, and hope soon to hear of some favorable adventure there, as an attempt will be made upon the enemy at that place.

After the battle of Monmouth, I marched for this place, where I have been encamped more than a fortnight. We cut off, by the present position of the army, all land supplies to the city of New York, and had the best reasons to believe that the troops there were suffering greatly for want of provisions, but the French fleet, leaving the Hook, opens a door to the Sea, through which, no doubt, they will endeavor to avail themselves.

Give my love to Nelly, Colonel Bassett, and the rest of our friends, and be assured that I am, with sincere regard and affection,

Yours.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

CAMP, NEAR WHITE PLAINS,
22 July, 1778.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing you on the 14th, I have been favoured with your Letters of the 11th and 17th with their respective enclosures.

The next morning after the receipt of the former, which came to hand on the 17th, I despatched Lt. Colo. Hamilton, another of my Aides, with the best pilots and the most skilful masters of ships, I could procure to Admiral D'Estaing, to converse with him more fully on the subject of his operations, than I was able to direct Lt. Colo. Laurens to do, for want of the information which I afterwards obtained from Major Chouin and a knowledge in several other points besides.

On Sunday night Mr. Laurens returned; and I found by him, that it was the Count's first wish to enter at Sandy hook, in order to possess himself of, or to destroy if possible, the whole of the British fleet lying in the Bay of New York; and that, for this purpose, he had been much engaged in his inquiries about the depth of water, and in sounding the channel to ascertain it; the result of which was, that the water, from the experiments made, was too shallow at the entrance to admit his large ships; or, if they could be got in, it appeared that it would not be without a great deal of difficulty and risk. After this disappointment, the next important object which seemed to present itself was an attempt against Rhode Island, which the Count inclined to make,

unless I should advise the contrary, as soon as the Chimère frigate, which had carried his Excellency Monsieur Gerard into the Delaware, should rejoin him.

Lt.-Colo. Hamilton, who was well informed of our situation and of my sentiments on every point, was instructed to give the Admiral a full and accurate state of facts, and to acquaint him what aid, and how far we could coöperate with him in case of an attempt either against New York or Rhode Island; and also to obtain his ideas of the plan and system, which he might think ought to be pursued, and to agree with him on certain Signals. Previous to my despatching Mr. Hamilton, from the information I received on my inquiries respecting the navigation at the Hook, I was led to suspect, however interesting and desirable the destruction or capture of the British fleet might be, that it was not sufficient to introduce the Count's ships. Under this apprehension, I wrote to General Sullivan on the 17th by Express, that an Expedition might take place in a short time against Rhode Island, and urged him at the same time to apply to the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, & Connecticut for as many men as would augment his force to Five thousand, and also to make every possible preparation of boats, provision, pilots, &c., as if the event was fixed and certain.

From this time till about Twelve O'clock on Sunday, the Troops continued passing the River, when I crossed with the last division. On Monday afternoon I arrived at this place, in the neighborhood of which

the right and left wing encamped that night, with the second line a few miles in their rear. And here I am happy to add, that their passage across the river was effected without any accident, or without any more delay than necessarily attended the work.

Being persuaded now from the conversation, which I have had with several pilots and masters of Vessels, of character, as well as from the accounts of other gentlemen, and Colo. Laurens's report on his return, that the passing of the Count's ships by the Hook would be extremely precarious, if not impracticable, I determined yesterday, which was as soon as it could be done without waiting for further intelligence upon the subject, to put Two Brigades under marching orders. They accordingly marched this morning at Two o'clock for Rhode Island, under the particular command of Generals Varnum and Glover respectively, and both under the direction, for the present, of the Marquis de Lafayette. A water conveyance was thought of and wished for the ease of the troops; but, on consideration of all circumstances, such as the difficulty of providing vessels, the change and precariousness of the winds, and the risk from the Enemy's Ships, &c. their route by land was deemed by far the more eligible. The force with General Sullivan, from the best and latest advice I have been able to obtain, is about Three thousand. A Detachment under Colo. Jackson,[1] will follow Varnum's and Glover's brigades.

The inclosed papers No. 1, reporting eight persons

[1] Colonel Henry Jackson.

sent from Bennington and ordered into the Enemy's lines came to hand yesterday. About the same time I received a Letter from Governor Clinton, containing a petition by the Prisoners and a Letter from the Committee of Albany; all remonstrating against the proceeding. As this is a matter, in which I have no authority to act, nor in which I would wish to intermeddle, I take the liberty of referring it to Congress, that they may decide upon it. The prisoners are at West Point and ordered to be detained there for the present.

I would also take the liberty of transmitting to Congress a Letter from Captn. Gibbs, and of recommending him to their consideration. His letter was to have been sent by the Baron Steuben, before we marched from Valley forge, but his declining to go to Yorktown, at that time, and our move thro' the Jerseys delayed it's being done. The Captain has been in the army from the commencement of the War, and in the capacities, which he mentions. When Congress were pleased to honor me with the appointment of officers for the sixteen additional Batallions, I offered to make some provision for him, but this he declined, preferring to remain in my family. The Guard he originally commanded, consisted of Fifty men, but since the arrival of Baron Steuben, it has been augmented to a hundred and fifty. The Baron advised that there should be a select corps of this number to receive the manœuvres in the first instance and to act as a model to the Army; and proposed that it should be formed of the old guard company

and drafts from the line. I presume, if it should be Congress's pleasure, a majority would be highly agreeable to the Captain, and that it is as much as he expects.

Eleven o'clock, P. M.—I this moment received a Letter from Colo. Hamilton, who is on his return to the army, dated the 20th, at Black Point. He informs me, that the Count d'Estaing would sail the next evening for Rhode Island, being convinced from actual soundings, that he could not enter the ships. He was anxiously waiting the arrival of the Chimère, but, at all events, meant to sail at the time he mentions. The Admiral has agreed on Signals with Mr. Hamilton. Immediatly after this Letter came to hand, my aid, Mr. Laurens set out for Providence, having many things to communicate to General Sullivan upon the subject of his coöperation, which neither time nor propriety would suffer me to commit to paper. Genl. Sullivan is directed not to confine the number of his Troops to Five thousand, but to augment it, if he shall judge it necessary to ensure his success.

I was informed by Mr. Laurens that the Count D'Estaing's magazine of bread is not so large as we could wish, and that in the course of a few weeks, he will be in want. This circumstance I thought it right to mention, and I should suppose, that any quantity of Biscuit may be Provided in a little time at Philadelphia.

The Inclosures No. 2, are copies of three Letters from myself to the Admiral. I flatter myself the present of stock, which I directed for him, on his first

arrival, in behalf of the States, will be approved by Congress.

The accounts from the Western frontiers of Tryon County are distressing. The spirit of the savages seems to be roused, and they appear determined on mischief and havoc, in every Quarter. By a letter from Governor Clinton of the 21st they have destroyed Springfield and Andreas Town, and are marching towards the settlements on the West branch of the Delaware. These incursions are extremely embarrassing to our other affairs and I think will justify a conclusion that Sr. Henry Clinton's intention was to operate up the North River. Whether it may have changed with circumstances cannot be determined. I have detached the 4th Pensylvania Regiment and the remains of Morgan's corps under Lt. Colo. Butler, and also Colo. Graham with a York State regiment, to co-operate with the militia and to check the Indians if possible. Colo. Butler is an enterprising good Officer and well acquainted with the savage mode of warfare; and I am persuaded whatever comes within the compass of his force and abilities, will be done.[1]

I have, &c.

[1] "I am in a great measure a total stranger to the expedition against Detroit, and entirely so to that against the Senecas. Agreeable to the direction of Congress, I sent General McIntosh and two regiments to Fort Pitt, but whether an expedition is immediately intended against Detroit, or whether these troops are to remain a defence for the western frontier, I do not know. The parties of Indians and others, under Butler and Brandt, have already done considerable mischief in the north east corner of Pennsylvania, having cut off the inhabitants and intirely destroyed the settlement of Wyoming."—*Washington to General Schuyler*, 22 July, 1778.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 22d July, 1778.

SIR,

I this moment received the letter, which you did me the honor of writing by Lt.-Colonel Hamilton. I cannot forbear regretting that the brilliant enterprise, which you at first meditated, was frustrated by physical impossibilities; but hope that something equally worthy of the greatness of your sentiments is still in reserve for you. Upon the report, made to me by Lt.-Col. Laurens, of the depth of the water at Sandy hook, and the Draught of your Ships of the Line, I thought that no time was to be lost in marching a reinforcement to Genl. Sullivan, that he might be in a situation for a vigorous coöperation. I am happy to find, that we coincided so exactly in the importance of this expedition.[1]

[1] Count d'Estaing, in his letter to Congress explaining his operations on the coast, complains of being deceived by the pilot he took from the Delaware River, who assured him, that the squadron could pass around the Hook. "Circumstances required," said he, "that I should reconnoitre the coast myself, and determined me to go almost alone in a boat. By these means we discovered the communication of Shrewsbury River, the extreme difficulties of which cost me an officer, several sailors, and a quantity of rowing-boats. They exposed Colonel Laurens to the most imminent danger of being drowned in bringing me General Washington's despatches, and put him in a situation to prove, that his patriotism and his courage made him brave the most imposing dangers of the sea with the same firmness as the fire of the enemy. Both officers and crews were kept in spirits, notwithstanding their wants and the fatigues of service, by the desire of delivering America from the English colors, which we saw waving, on the other side of a simple barrier of sand, upon so great a crowd of masts. The pilots procured by Colonels Laurens and Hamilton destroyed all illusion. These experienced persons unanimously declared, that it was impossible to carry us in. I offered in vain a reward of fifty thousand crowns to any one, who would promise success. All refused, and the particular soundings, which I caused to be taken myself, too well demonstrated, that they were right."—*Letter*, August 26th.

Mr. Laurens, who will have the honor of delivering you this, will inform you of my opinion relative to the stationing of a ship of the line in the Sound, as well as of other particulars, which I have communicated to him. I shall not therefore employ your attention farther than to assure you, that you have inspired me with the same sentiments for you, which you are so good as to entertain for me, and that it will be my greatest happiness to contribute to the service of our great ally in pursuing our common enemy, and to the glory of an officer, who has on every act. so just a claim to it, as the Count d'Estaing.[1]

The amiable manners of Major Chouin would of themselves entitle him to my esteem, if he had not the best of titles in your recommendation; and I beg

[1] "Colo. Laurens will suggest to his Excellency Count de Estaing the advantages that would more than probably result from a French ship of (sufficient) force getting into the sound, as far up as Lyons Tongue, or somewhere thereabouts. A measure of this kind would clear that channel of the British armed Vessels which now infest it, and cover the passage—and landing of a party of men wch. might be sent to long Island for the purposes of removing the cattle out of the way of the Enemy, destroying their Horses, &ca., and would afford supplies of fresh provisions to the Fleet, vegetables, and other comforts.

"The Vessels belonging to the Harbors of Connecticut would presently take off the fat cattle and other stock if the British cruisers were driven from the Communication between the Island and the Main.

"How far the enterprise upon Rhode Island is compatible with a watch of the Fleet in the harbor of New York is wholly submitted to the Admiral's superior judgment—But, as an Imbarkation of the Army at that place cannot happen without notice being had of it, nor an evacuation of the harbor after it is begun in less than 48 hours, I would take the liberty of recalling the subject to his consideration as the destruction of the Fleet after it had passed the hook might be the consequence of the attempt.

"The enterprize upon Rhode Island might be followed by an attempt upon Hallifax; which if fortunate would be a deadly stroke to G. Britain as it is the only Dock on the Continent in which ships of large force can Careen, and moreover abounds in Naval & Military stores of all kinds."—*Memorandum to Colonel Laurens.*

you to be assured, that nothing on my part shall be wanting to render his stay in Camp agreeable. At the same time permit me to add, that your great civilities and politeness to my aids cannot but increase my regard, while they serve to give me additional ideas of your worth. I have now only to offer my sincere wishes for your success in this and every Enterprise, and the assurances of the perfect Respect and Esteem, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

WHITE PLAINS, 24 July, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Whether you are indebted to me, or I to you, for a letter, I know not, nor is it a matter of much moment. The design of this is to touch, cursorily, upon a subject of very great importance to the well-being of these States; much more so than will appear at first view. I mean the appointment of so many foreigners to offices of high rank and trust in our service.

The lavish manner, in which rank has hitherto been bestowed on these gentlemen, will certainly be productive of one or the other of these two evils, either to make it despicable in the eyes of Europe, or become a means of pouring them in upon us like a torrent, and adding to our present burden. But it is neither the expense nor the trouble of them that I most dread. There is an evil more extensive in its

nature, and fatal in its consequences, to be apprehended, and that is, the driving of all our own officers out of the service, and throwing not only our army, but our military councils, entirely into the hands of foreigners.

The officers, my dear Sir, on whom you must depend for the defence of this cause, distinguished by length of service, their connexions, property, and, in behalf of many, I may add, military merit, will not submit much if any longer to the unnatural promotion of men over them, who have nothing more than a little plausibility, unbounded pride and ambition, and a perseverance in application not to be resisted but by uncommon firmness, to support their pretensions ; men, who, in the first instance, tell you they wish for nothing more than the honor of serving so glorious a cause as volunteers, the next day solicit rank without pay, the day following want money advanced to them, and in the course of a week want further promotion, and are not satisfied with any thing you can do for them.

When I speak of officers not submitting to these appointments, let me be understood to mean, that they have no more doubt of their right to resign, when they think themselves aggrieved, than they have of a power in Congress to appoint. Both being granted, then, the expediency and the policy of the measure remain to be considered, and whether it is consistent with justice or prudence to promote these military fortune-hunters, at the hazard of your army. They may be divided into three classes, namely, mere

adventurers without recommendation, or recommended by persons, who do not know how else to dispose of or provide for them; men of great ambition, who would sacrifice every thing to promote their own personal glory; or mere spies, who are sent here to obtain a thorough knowledge of our situation and circumstances, in the execution of which, I am persuaded, some of them are faithful emissaries, as I do not believe a single matter escapes unnoticed, or unadvised at a foreign court.

I could say a great deal on this subject, but will add no more at present. I am led to give you this trouble at this time, by a *very handsome* certificate showed to me yesterday in favor of M. Neuville, written (I believe) by himself, and subscribed by General Parsons, designed, as I am informed, for a foundation of the superstructure of a brigadiership.

Baron Steuben, I now find, is also wanting to quit his inspectorship for a command in the line. This will be productive of much discontent to the brigadiers. In a word, although I think the Baron an excellent officer, I do most devoutly wish, that we had not a single foreigner among us, except the Marquis de Lafayette, who acts upon very different principles from those which govern the rest. Adieu. I am, most sincerely yours, &c.

P. S. This letter as you will perceive is written with the freedom of a friend. Do not therefore make me enemies by publishing what is intended for your own information & that of particular friends.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

CAMP, NEAR WHITE PLAINS,
24 July, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I had yesterday the pleasure to receive your favor of the 18th instant, with the enclosure and packets which you mentioned.

I should have been sorry, if you or Monsieur Gerard had found the smallest difficulty in recommending the packets for the Count d'Estaing to my care; and I am happy to inform you, that they will meet with a speedy and safe conveyance to him by an officer, who has set off for Rhode Island.

It is very pleasing as well as interesting to hear, that prizes are already finding their way into the Delaware. The event seems the more agreeable, as that navigation, but yesterday as it were, could scarcely contain the enemy's fleet and their numerous captures, which were constantly crowding in. Happy change! and I should hope, that the two prizes, which have entered, will be succeeded by many more. The want of information, on the one hand of Philadelphia's being evacuated, and the countenance which our armed vessels will derive from the French squadron on our coasts must throw several into our possession.

The second epistle from the commissioners, of which you have so obligingly favored me with a copy, strikes me in the same point of view that it did you. It is certainly puerile; and does not border a little on indecorum, notwithstanding their professions of the regard they wish to pay to decency. It is difficult to

determine on an extensive scale, tho' part of their design is tolerably obvious, what the gentlemen would be at. Had I the honor of being a member of Congress, I do not know how I might feel upon the occasion; but it appears to me the performance must be received with a sort of indignant pleasantry, on account of its manner on the one hand, and on the other as being truly typical of that confusion in which their prince and nation are.[1]

By the time this reaches you, I expect the Messieurs Neuville[2] will be in Philadelphia. From the certificates these gentlemen have provided, if I may hazard a conjecture, they are in quest of promotion, particularly the elder. How far their views may extend, I cannot determine; but I dare predict, that they will be sufficiently high. My present intention is to tell you, and with freedom I do it, that Congress

[1] President Laurens had written, respecting the commissioners' second letter to Congress: "If I dared to venture an opinion from a very cursory reading of the performance, it would be, that this is more puerile than any thing I have seen from the other side since the commencement of our present dispute, with a little dash of insolence, as unnecessary as it will be unavailing." The puerile part of the letter is that in which the commissioners attempt to evade the positive requisition of Congress, as a preliminary of a negotiation, namely, an acknowledgment of independence, or a withdrawal of the King's fleets and armies. They consent neither to the one nor the other, and yet contend that Congress may proceed to negotiate according to their own principles. The indecorous and offensive part is that, wherein the commissioners demand by what authority the Congress assume the prerogative of making treaties with foreign nations, and claim a right to be informed of the particulars contained in the treaty with France, intimating that the same ought also to be known to the people, that they might judge whether such an alliance ought to be a reason for continuing the war. Congress voted, that no answer should be returned to the letter, and ordered it to be published.—*Journals*, July 18th. See the letter of the commissioners in the *Remembrancer*, vol. vii., p. 11.

[2] Chevalier de Laneuville, and his brother Noirmont Laneuville.

cannot be well too cautious on this head. I do not mean or wish to derogate from the merit of Messieurs Neuville. The opportunities I have had will not permit me to speak decisively for or against it. However, I may observe, from a certificate which I have seen, written by themselves, or at least by one of them, and signed by General Parsons, probably through surprise or irresolution, that they are not bad at giving themselves a good character; and I will further add, if they meet with any great promotion, I am fully convinced it will be ill borne by our own officers, and that it will be the cause of infinite discontent. The ambition of these men (I do not mean of the Messrs. Neuville in particular, but of the natives of their country and foreigners in general) is unlimited and unbounded; and the similar instances of rank, which have been conferred upon them in but too many cases, have occasioned general dissatisfaction and general complaint. The feelings of our own officers have been much hurt by it, and their ardor and love for the service greatly damped. Should a like proceeding still be practised, it is not easy to say what extensive murmurings and consequences may ensue. I will further add, that we have already a full proportion of foreign officers in our general councils; and, should their number be increased, it may happen upon many occasions, that their voices may be equal if not exceed the rest. I trust you think me so much a citizen of the world, as to believe I am not easily warped or led away by attachments merely local or American; yet I confess I

am not entirely without 'em, nor does it appear to me that they are unwarrantable, if confined within proper limits. Fewer promotions in the foreign line would have been productive of more harmony, and made our warfare more agreeable to all parties. The frequency of them is the source of jealousy and of disunion. We have many, very many, deserving officers, who are not opposed to merit wheresoever it is found, nor insensible to the advantages derived from a long service in an experienced army, nor to the principles of policy. Where any of these principles mark the way to rank, I am persuaded they yield a becoming and willing acquiescence; but, where they are not the basis, they feel severely. I will dismiss the subject, knowing that with you I need not labor, either in a case of justice or of policy. I am, &c.

P. S. The Baron Steuben will also be in Philadelphia in a day or two. The ostensible cause for his going is to fix more certainly with Congress his duties as inspector-general, which is necessary. However, I am disposed to believe that the real one is to obtain an actual command in the line as a major-general, and he may urge a competition set up by Monsieur Neuville for the inspector's place on this side of the Hudson, and the denial by him of the Baron's authority, as an argument to effect it, and the granting him the post, as a mean of satisfying both. I regard and I esteem the Baron, as an assiduous, intelligent, and experienced officer; but you may rely on it, if such is his view, and he should ac-

complish it, we shall have the whole line of brigadiers in confusion. They have said but little about his rank as major-general, as he has not had an actual command over 'em. But when we marched from Brunswic, as there were but few major-generals, and almost the whole of the brigadiers engaged at the court-martial, either as members or witnesses, I appointed him *pro tempore*, and so expressed it in orders, to conduct a wing to the North River. This measure, though founded in evident necessity, and not designed to produce to the brigadiers the least possible injury, excited great uneasiness, and has been the source of complaint. The truth is, we have been very unhappy in a variety of appointments, and our own officers much injured. Their feelings, from this cause, have become extremely sensitive, and the most delicate touch gives them pain. I write as a friend, and therefore with freedom. The Baron's services in the line he occupies can be singular, and the testimonials he has already received are honorable. It will also be material to have the point of the inspector-generalship, now in question between him and Monsieur Neuville, adjusted. The appointment of the latter, it is said, calls him Inspector-general in the army commanded by General Gates, and under this, as I am informed, he denies any subordination to the Baron, and will not know him in his *official capacity*. There can be but one head. With sentiments of warm regard and esteem, I am, &c.[1]

[1] Steuben's position is described in *Hamilton to Boudinot*, 26 July, 1778.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
26 July, 1778.

SIR,

The Baron de Steuben will have the honor of delivering you this. I am extremely sorry, that this gentleman's situation and views seem to have determined him to quit the service, in which he has been heretofore and is capable still of being extensively useful. Some discontents, which arose among the officers on account of the powers with which the office was at first vested, induced me to arrange the duties of it on a plan different from that in which it began. The moving state of the army has for some time past, in a great degree, suspended the exercise of the Inspectorate. When the Troops marched from Brunswic, the scarcity of General officers, most of them being engaged with the Court-martial, either as members or Witnesses, occasioned my giving the Baron a temporary command of a Division during the march. On our arrival near our present encampment, I intended he should relinquish this charge, and resume his former office, for which purpose a General Order was accordingly issued. But I find that he is entirely disinclined to the measure, and resolves not to continue in the Service unless he can hold an actual command in the line.

Justice concurring with inclination constrains me to testify, that the Baron has in every instance discharged the several trusts reposed in him with great Zeal and Ability, so as to give him the fullest title to

my esteem, as a brave, indefatigable, judicious, and experienced officer. I regret there should be a necessity, that his Services should be lost to the army; at the same time I think it my duty explicitly to observe to Congress, that his desire of having an actual and permanent command in the line cannot be complied with, without wounding the feelings of a number of officers, whose rank and merit give them every claim to attention; and that the doing it would be productive of much dissatisfaction and extensive ill consequences. This does not proceed from any personal objections on the part of those officers against the Baron; on the contrary, most of them, whom I have heard speak of him, express a high sense of his military worth. It proceeds from motives of another nature, which are too obvious to need particular explanation, or may be summed up in this, that they conceive such a step would be injurious to their essential rights and just expectations. That this would be their way of thinking upon the subject, I am fully convinced, from the effect which the temporary command given him, even under circumstances so peculiar as those I have mentioned, produced. The strongest symptoms of discontent appeared upon the occasion.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] Read August 1st. This letter was referred to a committee, who brought in a report, which Congress voted should be sent to General Washington for his opinion. In the meantime Congress requested Baron Steuben to repair to Rhode Island, and give his advice and assistance to General Sullivan, and the army under his command. With this request he complied.—*Journals*, August 28th, 29th.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
27 July, 1778.

DEAR MARQUIS,

This will be delivered to you by Major-General Greene, whose thorough knowledge of Rhode Island, of which he is a native, and the influence he will have with the people, put it in his power to be particularly useful in the expedition against that place; as well in providing necessaries for carrying it on, as in assisting to form and execute a plan of operations proper for the occasion. The honor and interest of the common cause are so deeply concerned in the success of this enterprise, that it appears to me of the greatest importance to omit no step, which may conduce to it; and General Greene on several accounts will be able to render very essential services in the affair.

These considerations have determined me to send him on the expedition, in which as he could not with propriety act nor be equally useful merely in his official capacity of Quarter Master-General, I have concluded to give him a command in the troops to be employed in the descent. I have therefore directed General Sullivan to throw all the American troops, both Continental, State, and Militia, into two divisions, making an equal distribution of each, to be under the immediate command of General Greene and yourself. The Continental troops being divided in this manner with the Militia, will serve to give them confidence, and probably make them act better than they would alone. Though this arrangement

will diminish the number of Continental troops under you, yet this diminution will be more than compensated by the addition of militia; and I persuade myself your command will not be less agreeable, or less honorable, from this change in the disposition. I am, with great esteem and affection, dear Marquis, your most obedient servant.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
31st July, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have been favd. with yours of the 27th 10 o'clock, A.M. Upon opening of it, I was much disappointed at not hearing of Count d'Estaing's arrival, who I

[1] By this arrangement the command originally intended for the Marquis de Lafayette was divided, and the manner in which the intelligence was received by him was so honorable to his feelings, and to the principles upon which he acted, that his reply deserves to be recorded. "I have received your Excellency's favor by General Greene," he writes, "and have been much pleased with the arrival of the gentleman, who, not only on account of his merit and the justness of his views, but by his knowledge of the country and his popularity in this State, may be very serviceable to the expedition. I willingly part with half my detachment, since you find it for the good of the service, though I had great dependence on them. Any thing, my dear General, which you shall order or can wish, will always be infinitely agreeable to me; and I shall always be happy in doing any thing that may please you or forward the public good. I am of the same opinion as your Excellency, that dividing our Continental troops among the militia will have a better effect, than if we were to keep them together in one wing."—*MS Letter*, Providence, August 6th.

"Your favor of the 6th instant, which came to my hands yesterday, afforded a fresh proof of the noble principles on which you act, and has a just claim to my sincere and hearty thanks. The common cause, of which you have been a zealous supporter, would, I knew, be benefited by General Greene's presence at Rhode Island, as he is a native of that State, has an interest with the people, and a thorough knowledge of the country; and therefore I accepted his proffered services; but I was a little uneasy, lest you should conceive that it was

hope will have made his appearance off the harbor of Newport before this time, as a reinforcement passed Mamaronec the day before yesterday morning.[1] I wish it had been in my power to spare a larger detachment of Continental Troops; but remember I am left near the Enemy, with a Force inferior to theirs upon New York and the adjacent Islands. I am much pleased with the account of the readiness which you were in, to begin operations, as soon as the Count and the Marquis should arrive; and I flatter myself, that you will receive no small assistance from Genl. Greene, in the department of quarter-master-general as well as in the military line.[2]

intended to lessen your command. General Greene did not incline to act in a detached part of the army, merely as quartermaster-general; nor was it to be expected. It became necessary, therefore, to give him a detached command, and consequently to divide the Continental troops. Your cheerful acquiescence in the measure, after being appointed to the command of the brigades which marched from this army, obviated every difficulty, and gave me singular pleasure."—*Washington to Lafayette*, 10 August, 1778.

[1] As soon as it was decided, that the French fleet could not pass round the Hook, and it was resolved to make a combined attack on the British in Newport, Colonel Laurens was sent to Rhode Island to engage pilots and make arrangements for meeting Count d'Estaing on his arrival. He reached Providence on the 24th of July, and the next day proceeded to Point Judith, with an ample number of pilots under the command of Colonel Wall. Eight boats were obtained, suitable for boarding the ships, and well manned. A careful watch was kept along the shore, and every thing conducted with as much secrecy as possible, that the enemy might not discover them. The fleet appeared on the 29th, when the pilots went on board. General Sullivan came from Providence, where he was then stationed, boarded the Admiral's ship, and had an interview with him, in which the plan of future operations was arranged. The Marquis de Lafayette likewise paid a visit to the Count d'Estaing on the 30th, having reached Providence the day before.—*Sparks.*

[2] Although General Sullivan had every thing in readiness at Providence, as far as it depended on him, yet the troops did not arrive so soon as Count d'Estaing, and it was a week before they were prepared to coöperate in making a descent upon Rhode Island. This delay, which was unavoidable, may be

As you have mentioned the matter of carrying the Enemy's works by storm, and have submitted it to my consideration and advice, I will only say, that as I would not, on the one hand, wish to check the ardor of our Troops, so I would not, on the other, put them upon attempting what I thought they could not carry but with a moral certainty of success. You know the discipline of our men and officers very well, and I hope you, and the General Officers under your command, will weigh every desperate matter well before it is carried into execution. A severe check may ruin the expedition, while regular and determined approaches may effect the work, tho' perhaps they may take something longer time. Upon the whole, I will not undertake at this distance to give orders. I submit every thing to your prudence, and to the good advice of those about you. You have my sincere wishes for your success, as I am, yours, &c.

P. S. By a letter from the officer of the Mamaroneck Guard he does not seem certain that the Vessel which went thro' the Sound the day before yesterday had troops on Board, at least any considerable number.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARNOLD.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
3 August, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your two agreeable favors of the 19 and 22 ulto. came to hand which I now have to acknowledge.

considered the principal cause of defeat of the enterprise; for, if it had been undertaken immediately, it might have been effected before the British fleet arrived.

I am very happy to learn, that your wounds are less painful, and in so fair a way of doing well. The only drawback in the pleasure *we* receive is, that the condition of your wounds is still such, as not to admit of your active services this campaign. You will rest assured, that I wish to see you in a situation where you can be of the greatest advantage, and where abilities like yours may not be lost to the public; but I confess myself no competent judge in marine matters to offer advice on a subject so far out of my line; believe me tho' that it is my desire, that you may determine, in this case, in a manner most conducive to your health, honor, and Interest.

I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] It would seem, that there was in some quarter a design of offering the command of the American navy to General Arnold, and that he was not disinclined to accept the proposal. "My wounds," said he, "are in a fair way, and less painful than usual, though there is little prospect of my being able to take the field for a considerable time; which considerations, together with that of having been obliged entirely to neglect my private affairs since I have been in the service, has induced me to wish to retire from public business, unless an offer, which my friends have mentioned, should be made to me of the command of the navy; to which my being wounded would not be so great an objection, as it would by remaining in the army. I must beg leave to request your Excellency's sentiments respecting a command in the navy. I am sensible of my inability, and of the great hazard and fatigue attending the office, and that I should enjoy much greater happiness in a private life; still my wishes to serve my country have a greater weight with me, than domestic happiness or ease." —*MS. Letter*, July 19th. Arnold's ruling passion, and the cause of his ruin, was his love of money; which he coveted, not so much from a desire of accumulation, as to obtain the means of display and luxury. He no doubt thought, that the command of the navy would afford him better opportunities for the attainment of this great end of his wishes, than the land service. How far this motive operated, and whether he did not himself originate the idea of his being transferred to the navy, and communicate it to his friends, the reader must judge from the tenor of the above remarks, and the subsequent developments of his character.—*Sparks.*

TO THE BOARD OF WAR.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
3 August, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

I had the honor of receiving your favor of the 27th ulto., on the 1st instant, inclosing sundry resolves of Congress, and other papers respecting two expeditions meditated into the Indian country, one from the southward, and the other from the northward. Since the receipt of it, I have been endeavoring to collect the necessary information concerning the means already provided or to be provided towards prosecuting the latter; and I sincerely wish our prospects were more agreeable to the views of Congress than they are; but after examining the matter from every point of light, I am sorry to say an enterprise of this nature, at the present time under our present circumstances, appears to me liable to obstacles not easily to be surmounted.

On receiving your letter I wrote to General Gates; copies of mine to him and of his answer to me are inclosed. I do not find that any preparations have been made for the intended expedition; if the project should be continued almost every thing is still to be done. The Board will perceive that General Gates imagined it was laid aside.

Gov. Clinton happening to be in camp, I took occasion to consult him and General Gates jointly on the affair. They both concurred fully in the opinion, that a serious attempt to penetrate the Seneca settlements at this advanced season, and under present ap-

pearances, was by no means advisable, would be attended with many certain difficulties and inconveniences, and must be of precarious success. The reasons for this opinion are in my judgment conclusive.

Supposing the enemy's force is fifteen or sixteen hundred men (according to the estimate of the Board, accounts make it larger); to carry the war into the interior part of their country, with that probability of succeeding which would justify the undertaking, would require not less than three thousand men; and if the attempt is made, it ought to be made with such a force as will in a manner insure the event, for a failure could not but have the most pernicious tendency. From inquiries I have made, not more than about twelve hundred militia from the frontier counties could be seasonably engaged for a sufficient length of time to answer the purpose of the expedition; little or no assistance can be looked for from the people of the Grants, who are said to be under great alarm for their own security, which they think is every moment in danger of being disturbed by way of Choas. The deficiency must be made up in Continental troops; and as there are only four or five hundred already in that quarter, who might be made use of on this occasion, the residue must go immediately from this army. The making so considerable a detachment at this time, is, I conceive, a measure that could not be hazarded, without doing essential injury to our affairs here.

Of this the Board will be fully sensible, when they are informed, that the enemy's strength at New York and its dependencies is, at a moderate computation,

14,000 men; our strength on the present ground less than 13,000. Besides this number, only a bare sufficiency has been left in the Highlands to garrison the forts there. We have been lately reduced by a large detachment to Rhode Island, and it is possible a further detachment may become necessary. Should we weaken ourselves still more by an enterprise against the Indians, we leave ourselves in some degree at the mercy of the enemy, and should either choice or necessity induce them to move against us, the consequences may be disagreeable. Though there is great reason to suppose the enemy may wish to withdraw their force from these States, if they can do it with safety; yet if they find their departure obstructed by a superior maritime force, it may become a matter of necessity to take the field, and endeavor at all hazards, to open a communication with the country, in order to draw supplies from it and protract their ruin. This they will of course effect, if we have not an equal or superior army in the field to oppose them with. We should endeavor to keep ourselves so respectable as to be proof against contingencies.

The event of the Rhode Island expedition is still depending; if it should fail, we shall probably lose a number of men in the attempt. To renew it, if practicable, we should be obliged to send reinforcements from this army, which could very ill be spared with its present strength; but would be impossible, if it were diminished by a detachment for the Indian expedition. And then should the enemy unite their force, they would possess so decisive a superiority, as might

involve us in very embarrassing circumstances. If, on the contrary, we succeed at Rhode Island, a variety of probable cases may be supposed with reference to European affairs, which may make it extremely interesting to the common cause that we should have it in our power to operate with vigor against the enemy in this quarter; to do which, if it can be done at all, will at least require our whole force.

These considerations sufficiently evince that we cannot detach from this army the force requisite for the expedition proposed, without material detriment to our affairs here. And comparing the importance of the objects here, with the importance of the objects of that expedition, it can hardly be thought eligible to pursue the latter at the expence of the former. The depredations of the savages on our frontiers, and the cruelties exercised on the defenceless inhabitants, are certainly evils much to be deplored, and ought to be guarded against, as far as may be done consistent with proper attention to matters of higher moment; but they are evils of a partial nature, which do not directly affect the general security, and consequently can only claim a secondary attention. It would be highly impolitic to weaken our operations here, or hazard the success of them to prevent temporary inconveniences elsewhere.

But there are other objections to the measure of almost equal weight. The season is too far advanced for the enterprise. To raise and collect the troops, to lay up competent magazines, and to make other needful preparations necessary, and then to march

to the Seneca settlements and back again would exhaust at least five months from this time; and the rivers would be impracticable before it could be effected. This time will not be thought too long, if it is considered, that the preparations of every kind are yet to be begun; and that when completed an extent of more than three hundred miles is to be traversed, through a country wild and unexplored, the greater part hostile, and full of natural impediments. The rivers too at this time of the year are more shallow than at others which would be an additional source of difficulty and delay. I shall say little on the subject of provisions, though, it is a serious question, whether our resources are so far equal to our demands, that we can well spare so extensive supplies as this expedition will consume. Besides feeding our own troops, we shall probably soon have to victual the French Fleet which is said to have twelve thousand men on board.

Notwithstanding the opinion I entertain of this matter, founded upon a knowledge of many circumstances which Congress could not be fully apprised of, in obedience to their orders, I shall without delay take measures for forming magazines at Albany and upon the Mohawk River, and for preparing every thing else for the expedition, except calling out the militia, and shall be glad of the further directions of Congress as speedily as possible. If it is their pleasure that it should still go on, I shall apply for an aid of militia and can soon march the detachment of troops which must be sent from this army.

I take the liberty however to offer it as my opinion, that the plan for subduing the unfriendly Indians ought to be deferred till a moment of greater leisure. We have a prospect that the British army will ere long be necessitated either to abandon the possessions they now hold and quit these States, or perhaps to do something still more disgraceful. If either should arrive, the most effectual way to chastise the Indians, and disarm them for future mischief, will be to make an expedition into Canada. By penetrating as far as Montreal, they fall of course, destitute of suppplies for continuing their hostilities, and of support to stimulate their enmity. This would strike at once at the root, the other would only lop off a few branches, which would soon spread out anew, nourished and sustained by the remaining trunk.

Instead of the expedition resolved upon, it might be advisable to establish a well furnished garrison of about three hundred continental troops somewhere near the head of the Susquehanna, at Unadilla, or in the vicinity of that place, and at the same time to establish a good post at Wyoming, with some small intermediate post. These posts would be a great security to the frontiers; and would not only serve as barriers against the irruptions of the savages, but with the occasional aid of the militia would be convenient for making little inroads upon their nearest settlements; and might facilitate a more serious enterprise when it shall be judged expedient. I shall be glad of the sentiments of Congress on this proposition.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
August the 3d, 1778.

SIR,

I do myself the honor of transmitting to Congress a copy of a Letter from General Knox, and of sundry observations and remarks on the Ordnance establishment, of the 11th of Feby., which I received about the time we marched from Valley Forge. These would have been transmitted before, had it not been for the moving state of the army, and a variety of other Objects which engrossed my attention. We have found by experience, that some inconveniences have resulted from the establishment, which I conceive, have proceeded principally from the total independence of the Commissary General of Military stores, on the Commanding Officer of Artillery. It seems some alterations are necessary and what they shall be, Congress will be pleased to determine.

It is not without reluctance that I am constrained, to renew my importunities on the subject of the Committee of Arrangement. The present unsettled state of the Army, is productive of so much disatisfaction and of such a variety of disputes, that almost the whole of my time is now employed, in finding temporary and inadequate expedients to quiet the minds of Officers and keep business on a tolerable sort of footing. Not an hour passes without new applications and new complaints about rank—and for want of a proper adjustment of this and many other essential points, our affairs are in a most irksome and injurious train. We can scarcely form a Court Martial or

parade a detachment in any instance, without a warm discussion on the subject of precedence, and there are several Good Officers now, who are forced to decline duty, to prevent disputes and their being commanded by others, who upon every principle are their Inferiors; unless their having obtained Commissions before them, from the opportunities they had of making earlier applications from local circumstances, should be considered sufficient, to give them a superior claim. There are many other causes of dissatisfaction on this head, but I will not enter into a minute relation of them. I sincerely wish, that the Gentlemen appointed, or such others as Congress may think proper to nominate for the occasion, would immediately repair to Camp. The present opportunity is favorable for reducing matters to system and order—and from painful experience I know, there is an absolute necessity for it.

I should also hope, that Congress will excuse me for mentioning again the necessity there is for appointing some Brigadiers. The Massachusetts, by the resignation of General Learned, wants one—Pensylvania, as General Hand is not here, has but one with the Army—Maryland, which has two large Brigades in the field, has only General Smallwood; and the North Carolina troops, since the departure of Genl. McIntosh, have been without any. As I had taken the liberty, upon a former occasion, to offer my sentiments to Congress and their Committee upon this subject, I should not trouble them now if I was not more & more convinced that the

service required promotions in this line. The frequent changes which take place among the officers where there are no Brigadiers, are attended with great inconvenience and detriment; and they are an effectual bar to the introduction of discipline. In such cases, the Officers know, that their command is but temporary—always liable to cease—and therefore they do not find themselves sufficiently interested to promote order and subordination;—nor will the rest look up to them with that respect and deference which are essential. Every day's experience proves this—and shews beyond question that the affairs of a Brigade can never be in a right train without a Brigadier, or some General to direct them. It is certain, these appointments at the first view, will add a little to the list of expence, but in the end they will be a great saving—and produce many important advantages. We are also a good deal distressed at this time for Major Generals; however, as this arises more from the peculiar circumstances and situation of many, which prevent them from duty in the line, than from a deficiency in the number appointed, I shall not add upon the occasion.

There is another branch of the Army which in my opinion calls loudly for the appointment of a General Officer—and this is the Cavalry. For want of a proper regulating Head in this Corps, the whole has been in confusion, and of but very little service; whereas under a right management it might be most useful. The principal Officers in it do not harmonise, which circumstance with their disputes about rank

would, were there no other Objections, effectually prevent the Corps from rendering the Public the services they have a right to expect—and of which it should be capable. To promote any Gentleman now in it to a general command, would not be acquiesced in by the rest (nor do I know that any of them wish it) and it would increase their misunderstanding and of course disorder. I mean to draw all the Horse immediately together, when I trust they will be under the direction of a General Officer, appointed by Congress for the purpose. Who he shall be, will remain solely with them to determine. However I will take the liberty to add, that he should be intelligent—active—attentive, and as far as I can judge General Cadwalader or General Reed would fill the post with great honor and advantage—tho' it would seem from the seat the latter has taken in Congress, and from his late appointment to the Council of Pensylvania, as if he had declined every Military vie[w]. The abilities of these Gentlemen, as well as their atta[ch]ment, are generally known, and I am led to believe that either would be as acceptable to the Corps, as any person that can be found ;—indeed I have learned as much from two of the Colonels.

I have been waiting with the most impatient anxiety to hear of Count D'Estaing's arrival at Rhode Island, but as yet I have not been so happy. My last intelligence from there is a Letter from Genl. Sullivan dated at 10 o'clock in the forenoon of the 27th when he had no advice of the Fleet. He was in high spirits and from the preparation in which

matters were, he entertained the most flattering hopes of success in the intended Enterprize. The Brigades of Varnum and Glover, with Jackson's detachment, would arrive I expect on the 2d Inst.

As the army was encamped and there was no great prospect of a sudden removal, I judged it adviseable to send Genl. Greene to the Eastward on Wednesday last; being fully persuaded his services, as well in the Quartermaster line, as in the field, would be of material importance, in the expedition against the Enemy in that quarter. He is intimately acquainted with the whole of that Country, and besides he has an extensive interest and influence in it. And in justice to General Greene, I take occasion to observe, that the public is much indebted to him for his judicious management and active exertions in his present department. When he entered upon it he found it in a most confused—distracted and destitute state. This by his conduct and industry has undergone a very happy change, and such as enabled us with great facility, to make a sudden move with the whole army & baggage from Valley forge in pursuit of the Enemy, and to perform a march to this place. In a word he has given the most general satisfaction and his affairs carry much the face of method and system.—I also consider it as an act of justice, to speak of the conduct of Colo. Wadsworth, Commissary General. He has been indefatigable in his exertions to provide for the Army, and since his appointment our supplies of provision have been good and ample.

August 4th. At 7 o'clock in the Evening yester-

day, I received the inclosed Letter from Genl. Sullivan, with one addressed to myself, a copy of which I do myself the pleasure of forwarding. I am exceedingly happy in the Count's arrival—and that things wear so pleasing an aspect.

There is another subject, on which I must take the liberty of addressing Congress,—which is that of the Cloathier's department. I am perfectly satisfied that unless this very important and interesting Office is put under better regulations and under a different Head than it now is, the Army will never be cloathed. Mr. Mease is by no means fit for the business. It is a work of immense difficulty to get him to Camp upon any occasion—and no order can retain him there sufficiently long—either to answer the demands of the Troops, or to acquire more than a very slight and imperfect knowledge of them. This of itself, according to my ideas, would make him highly culpable—but there are other circumstances. He is charged with inactivity, in not pursuing the best and all the means that present themselves, to provide Cloathing. His Agents too, who have been with the Army, from inability or a want of industry—or proper instructions from their principal, have been very incompetent to the purposes of their appointment. Besides these objections, Mr. Mease unhappily is represented to be of a very unaccommodating cast of temper and his general deportment towards the Officers who have had to transact business with him, has rendered himself exceedingly obnoxious. The constant and daily complaints against him, make it my

indispensible duty to mention these points—and it is the more so, as I believe both Officers and Men, particularly the latter, have suffered greater inconveniences and distresses, than Soldiers ever did before for want of Cloathing; and that this has not flowed more from a real scarcity of articles, than a want of proper exertions and provident management to procure them. It is essential that something should be done, and immediately, to place the department on a better footing. We have now a great many men entirely destitute of Shirts and Breeches and I suppose not less than a fourth or fifth of the whole here who are without shoes. From the deficiencies in this line numbers of desertions have proceeded, not to mention deaths, and what is still worse, the Troops which remain and see themselves in rags want that spirit and pride necessary to constitute a Soldier.

I have been informed by several Officers and by such as I can depend on, that many of the late Draughts are willing and desirous of enlisting during the War. I do not conceive myself at liberty to give direction on the point and therefore submit it to Congress to decide. However, if they can be engaged for the usual bounties allowed by the Continent, after proper precautions are taken to prevent fraud, I think the measure will be expedient. It is true our Affairs have an agreable aspect at present —but the War may continue and we want men. A third of the time of some of them, and a half in the case of others, is already expired; and, as they will

rise in their views and become more difficult in proportion as their service draws to a conclusion, if the step is considered adviseable, the sooner we attempt to enlist the better in all probability will the work succeed. I have, &c.

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

WHITE PLAINS, 3 August, 1778.

DEAR CUSTIS,

Your Letter of the 15th ulto. from New Kent came to my hands by the last Post and gave me the pleasure of hearing that you, Nelly & the little ones were well.

You should not delay recording my Deed to you, because you cannot I am told, make a proper conveyance to Henry till this happens, the postponing of it therefore, may not be a pleasing circumstance to him.—As you seemed so desirous of living in Fairfax —as I know it will be an agreeable measure to your Mother—and a pleasing one to me, I am very glad to find that you have purchased Robt. & Gerrd. Alexander's Lands, as they are pleasantly situated and capable of great improvement.—These two Gentn. not only knew how to take advantage of the times but resolved to profit by them and here, early & in time —as a friend & one who has your welfare at heart; —let me entreat you to consider the consequences of paying compound Interest.—Your having 24 yrs. to pay Mr. Robt. Alexander without his having it in his power to call upon you for any part of the principal

or Interest, is in my judgment an unfortunate circumstance for you—a Dun now and then might serve as a monitor to remind you of the evil tendency of paying compound Interest, and the fatal consequence which may result from letting a matter of this sort sleep. Without it you may be plunged into a most enormous debt without thinking of it, or giving that timely attention, which the importance of it is requisite. I presume you are not unacquainted with the fact of £12,000 at compound Interest amounting to upward of £48,000 in twenty-four years. Reason therefore must convince you that unless you avert the evil by a deposit of the like sum in the loan office—and there hold it sacred to the purpose of accumulating Interest in the same proportion you pay, that you will have abundant cause to repent it. No Virginia Estate (except a very few under the best of management) can stand simple Interest; how then can they bear compound Interest—You may be led away with Ideal profits—you may figure great matters to yourself to arise from this, that, or t'other scheme, but depend upon it they will only exist in the imagination, and that year after year will produce nothing but disappointment and new hopes—these will waste time, whilst your Interest is accumg. and the period approaching when you will be called upon, unprepared perhaps, to advance 4 times the original purchase money. Remember therefore, that as a friend I call upon you with my advice to shun this rock by depositing the sum you are to pay Alexander, in the loan office—let it be considered as Alexander's money &

sacred to that use and that only, for if you shd. be of opinion that pay day being a great way off will give you time enough to provide for it, & consequently to apply your present cash to other uses, it does not require the gift of prophecy to predict the sale of the purchased Estate or some other to pay for it.

After this dissertation upon a subject which perhaps you may think I have no business *now* to intermeddle in, I shall approve your proposal for selling the Lands mentioned in your Letter to me, provided you can get an adequate price. But one circumstance should not be forgotten by you in these transactions, and that is that *your* Lands will go but a little way in the purchase of *others*, if you sell at three or four pounds an acre and give twelve: after this remark I shall only add, that if Mrs. Washington has no objections to your selling *her thirds* in *your Lands* about Williamsburg *or elsewhere*, I have not. The loan office Interest of whatever sum they fetch, I shall be content to receive whilst I have any concern in it; and your Mother, if she should be the survivor, consenting to do the same, removes every impediment & difficulty to yr. selling, and places the matter in my opinion upon a fair, just and equitable footing, as you will have the principal if you choose it, paying the Interest or may deposit in the loan office, to raise the Interest there (if more desirable) during her life when the whole will revert to you as the Land would do.

As you seem so well disposed to live in Fairfax and have now fixed the matter by your late purchases of the Alexanders, I should, were I in your place, extend

my Ideas & views further than you have done, that is over & above the sale of the Eastern shore. Williamsburg & Hanover Lands, with the Lotts in the City, I would sell, or exchange, the whole below—for depend upon it, that whilst you live in Fairfax you will get very little benefit from an Estate in New Kent or King William, unless you have much better luck than most who have Plantations at a distance.

When I advise selling, I would no[t] be understood to mean at all hazards,—I would try in the first place, what I could get for my own Lands without bargaining for them unless it was conditionally.—I would then see whether some large Tracts of Land (not leased out) could not be had in Fairfax, Loudoun, Fauquier, Berkeley or Frederick, or on the Maryland side of the Potomack, and upon what terms they could be purchased, you will then from a comparative view be a judge of the propriety of selling your own & buying others, or holding fast what you have—Among those who holds large Tracts in Fairfax are the Fitzhughs, Mr. B. Fairfax, &c. In Loudoun & Fauquier, The Carters (who probably would be glad to exchange), the Lees, Turbervilles, Pages, Burwells &c.—Most of these being lowlanders, I think it not improbable but that bargains may be had of them, either by purchase or exchange.

With candor I have given you my opinion upon the several matters contained in your Letter.—If it is faulty, it proceeds from error in judgment not from the want of attachment—affection to you, or honest sincerity and is open to correction. I am, &c.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
8 Augt., 1778.

SIR,

I had the honor last night of receiving your favor of the 3d instant. I most sincerely sympathize with you in the regret you feel at the obstacles and difficulties you have heretofore encountered. Your case has certainly been a case of peculiar hardship; but you justly have the consolation, which arises from a reflection, that no exertions possible have been wanting in you to ensure success, the most ample and adequate to your wishes and to the important expectations from your command. The disappointments you have experienced proceed from circumstances, which no human foresight or activity can controul. None can desire more ardently than I do, that the future may compensate for the past, and that your efforts may be crowned with the full success they deserve.

I have just received a letter from Brigadier-General Maxwell, who is stationed in the Jerseys near Staten Island, dated yesterday at nine o'clock in the forenoon. Enclosed are extracts from it, which contain very interesting information.[1] The terms made use of are so positive and express, that it is natural to conclude the intelligence is well founded. Its importance induces me to lose no time in communicating it. What may be the real design of this movement can only be the subject of conjecture. Unless

[1] Intelligence of Lord Howe's sailing from the Hook with his fleet.

the fleet may have received advice of a reinforcement on the coast, which it is gone to join, with intention to bend their united force against you, it can scarcely be supposed that Lord Howe will be hardy enough to make any serious attempt with his present inferiority of strength. If he should, it can only be accounted for on the principle of desperation, stimulated by a hope of finding you divided in your operations against Rhode Island. This, however, is a very probable supposition. It is more likely he may hope, by making demonstrations towards you, to divert your attention from Rhode Island, and afford an opportunity to withdraw their troops and frustrate the expedition we are carrying on. I shall not trouble you with any further conjectures, as I am persuaded you will be able to form a better judgment than I can of his intentions, and of the conduct it will be proper to pursue in consequence.

In order to aid in removing the inconveniences you sustain in the article of water, and relieve the sufferings of the brave officers and men under your command, whose patience and perseverance cannot be too highly commended, I have written to Governor Trumbull of the State of Connecticut, requesting his endeavors to collect vessels and load them with water at New London for the use of your fleet. I shall be happy if this application is productive of the desired effect. I send you a New York paper of the 5th, which is not unworthy of attention. Allow me to assure you of the warm respect and regard, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

TO LUND WASHINGTON.[1]

WHITE PLAINS, 15 August, 1778.

DEAR LUND,

Your Letter of the 29th Ulto. Inclosing a line from Captn. Marshall to you came to my hands yesterday. —I have no reason to doubt the truth of your observation, that this Gentleman's Land & others equally well situated, & under like circumstances, will sell very high. The depreciation of our money—the high prices of every article of produce, & the redundancy of circulating paper will, I am persuaded have an effect upon the price of land, nor is it to be wondered at when a Barrl. of Corn which used to sell for 10/, will now fetch 40—when a Barl. of Porke that formerly could be had for £3, sells for £15, & so with respect to other articles which serves to enable the man who has been fortunate enough to succeed in raising these things to pay accordingly; but, unfortunately for me, this is not my case, as my Estate in Virginia is scarce able to support itself whilst it is not possible for it to derive any benefit from my labors here.

I have premised these things to shew my inability, not my unwillingness to purchase the Lands in my own Neck at (almost) any price—& this I am yet very desirous of doing if it could be accomplished by any means in my power, in ye way of Barter for other Land—for Negroes (of whom I every day long more & more to get clear of,) or in short—for any thing else (except Breeding Mares and Stock of other

[1] "Rough draft of part of the letter."—*Washington's endorsement.*

kinds) which I have in my possession; but for money I cannot, I want the means.—Marshall's Land alone, at the rate he talks of would amount to (if my memory of the quantity he holds, is right) upwards of £3,000—a sum I have little chance, if I had much inclination, to pay; & therefore would not engage it, as I am resolved not to incumber myself with Debt.

Marshall is not a necessitous man, is only induced to offer his Land for sale, in expectation of a high price—& knowing perhaps but for wch. my wish to become possessed of the Land in what Neck, will practise every deception in his power to work me (or you in my behalf) up to his price, or he will not sell, —this should be well looked into and guarded against. —If as you think & as I believe, there is little chance of getting more—(at any rate) than the reversion of French's Land, I have no objection to the Land on which Morris lives going in exchange for Marshall's, or its being sold for the purpose of paying for it, but remember, it will not do to contract at a high price for the one, before you can be assured of an adequate sum for the other—without this, by means of the arts which may be practised, you may give much and receive little, which is neither my Inclination nor intention to do.—If Negroes could be given in exchange for this Land of Marshall's, or sold at a proportionable price, I should prefer it to the sale of Morris's Land as I still have some latent hope that French's Lands may be had of D.—for it.—but either I wd. part with.—

Having so fully expressed my Sentiments concerning this matter, I shall only add a word or two respecting Barry's Land.—The same motives which induce a purchase in the one case prevail in the other, and how ever unwilling I may be to part with that small tract I hold on difficult Run (containing by Deed, if I recollect right 275 acres, but by measurement upwards of 300), on acct. of the valuable Mill Seat, Meadow Grds. &cc., yet I will do it for the sake of the other; but if the matter is not managed with some degree of address you will not be able to effect an exchange without giving instead of receiving, Boot. For this Land also I had rather give Negroes—if Negroes would do, for to be plain I wish to get quit of Negroes.

I find by a Letter from Mr. Jones that he has bought the Phaeton which you sold Mr. Geo. Lewis and given him £300 for it—I mention this, with no other view than to remind you of the necessity of getting the money for wch. you sold it, of Lewis, (if you have not already done it)—He, probably, will propose to settle the matter with me, but this, for a reason I could mention, I desire may be avoided.

In your Letter of the 29th you say you do not suppose I would choose to cut down my best Land, & build Tobo. Houses, but what am I to do—or how am I to live.—I cannot support myself if I make nothing—& it is evident from yr. acct. that I cannot raise wheat if this crop is likely to share the fate of the three last. I should have less reluctance to clearing my richest Lands (for I think the Swamps are

these and would afterwards do for meadow) than building Houses.

I should not incline to sell the Land I had of Adams unless it should be for a price proportioned to what I must give for others. I could wish you to press my tenants to be punctual in the payment of their Rents; right & justice with respect to myself requires it, & no injury, on the contrary a real service to themselves, as the man who finds it difficult to pay one rent will find it infinitely more so to pay two, & his distresses multiply as the rents increase. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QRS., WHITE PLAINS,
16 August, 1778.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing you to-day by Captain Riley, I received a Letter from General Sullivan, a Copy of which is enclosed. From this it appears, that the Count d'Estaing had not returned with his Squadron on the 13th Inst.; and there is reason to fear, from the violence of the Weather ever since, that he has not yet got in. This accident has much deranged our views; and I shall be happy if it does not totally defeat our Enterprise against Rhode Island. I feel much for the Count. He has been peculiarly unfortunate in the combination of several untoward circumstances to frustrate his plans. The Letter addressed to you accompanied mine from General Sullivan. They were both delivered at the same

instant; and thro' inadvertence I broke the seal of yours. Before I had opened it, I discovered the mistake; and the contents have not been seen. This relation, I trust, will apologize for the measure. I have the honor to be, &c.

P.S.—Your favor of the 13th has come to hand.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, August 19th.

As the reinforcements from General Washington's army, and other forces intended for the expedition against Newport, had not arrived in Providence, when Count d'Estaing first appeared at Point Judith, it was necessary to delay the attack for several days. It was finally agreed, that the American and French forces should land at the same time near the northern extremity of Rhode Island on the 10th of August. Four thousand French troops were to be landed. To effect this movement, Count d'Estaing passed up through the middle channel with his fleet on the 8th, having been cannonaded in his passage by the batteries from the shore, but without sustaining much injury. On the same day the British evacuated the northern parts of the island, and retired within their lines at Newport. Every thing seemed now in readiness for the debarkation of the troops, and for the intended co-operation; but unfortunately the next day Lord Howe's fleet was seen off Point Judith, standing towards the harbor. The wind being favorable on the morning of the 10th, Count d'Estaing suddenly went out to sea with all his fleet, intending to seek a naval engagement with Lord Howe. A terrible storm, which arose the following night, dispersed the two fleets, prevented a general action, and caused much damage to several of the ships. Meantime Generals Sullivan, Greene, and Lafayette had crossed over to Rhode Island with the American troops, and were extremely disappointed and chagrined at the unexpected departure of their French allies. In the hope that the fleet would soon return, which, indeed, was promised by Count d'Estaing, they marched forward on the 15th, took post within two miles of the enemy's lines at Newport, commenced the erection of batteries, and in a short time opened a cannonade against the British works.

Count d'Estaing was censured for this step by the co-operating army, and by the public generally; but he vindicated himself in a letter to Congress, on the ground that his fleet was in a very dangerous situation the moment Lord Howe's squadron arrived. A large number of the sailors, who were suffering with the scurvy, had just been landed on Conanicut Island, and he had himself gone on shore to meet General Sullivan, leaving orders for the troops to follow, who were to join in the expedition. "The King's ships," said he, "were about to be left disarmed. The destruction of the British shipping at Newport rendered this state of things less imprudent, when the dissipation of the fog discovered to us Lord Howe's fleet approaching the entrance of the port. We counted

TO HENRY LAURENS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 20 August, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I am now to acknowledge my obligations for your favor of the 31st ulto., and for its several enclosures. The conduct of Governor Johnstone has been cer-

fourteen ships with two tiers of guns, many frigates, fire-ships, bomb-ketches, in all about thirty-six sail. However unexpected, surprising, and miraculous General Sullivan found the appearance of this fleet, as he did me the honor to inform me in his letter of the 10th of August, its existence was not the less certain. Nothing had announced it to me; not the least intelligence of the dispositions and departure of the English had reached me; the surprise was complete. Two of our ships were out, two others at the north end of the west channel, and our only three frigates at a distance in the eastern channel. The eight ships, with which I had forced the middle channel, were between Rhode Island, thick set with English batteries, and the Island of Connanicut, which I could not occupy without disarming my ships, and which by its extent afforded means of landing the troops, whom the English had brought, and of establishing batteries.

"Such was our maritime disposition. Our ships would shortly have been drawn so near together between these fires, that they would have been battered by a deliberate cannonade from the land, and we should in a short time have had to combat a squadron well protected, and provided with ketches, fire-ships, and all the means which ensure the greatest superiority over ships, that are altogether destitute of them, and which are forced to engage at anchor, and between two shores, in such an unequal combat."—*Letter*, August 26th.

This statement of the case seems at least plausible, and it is perhaps a sufficient justification of the course pursued by Count d'Estaing. Another motive, however, a natural and strong desire to try his skill and force in a conflict with Lord Howe's fleet, may be presumed to have operated powerfully. Although the number of his ships was less than that of Lord Howe's, yet in weight of metal and effective strength he had the advantage. The only essential injury sustained by the British at Newport, in consequence of the presence of the French fleet, was the loss of four frigates, and two smaller armed vessels, which were burnt to prevent their being taken. A frigate and another vessel were also sunk with the same design.

According to some historians, Count d'Estaing was displeased and disgusted, that General Sullivan should have landed on the island before the time appointed, and without consulting him. But his letter to Congress hardly warrants such an inference. "General Sullivan sent me word," he observes, "that he had not waited for the day appointed; that the English, astonished to see

tainly reprehensible, to say no worse of it; and so I think the world will determine. His letters to Mr. Morris and Mr. Reed are very significant, and the points to which they conclude quite evident. They are, if I may be allowed so to express myself, of a pulse-feeling cast; and the offer to the latter, through the lady, a direct attempt upon his integrity. When these things are known, he must share largely in public contempt, and the more so from the opposite parts he has taken.[1]

I am sorry you troubled yourself with transmitting to me copies and extracts from your letters to the French officers, in answer to their applications for rank. Your word, Sir, will always have the fullest credit with me, whenever you shall be pleased to give

me force the entrance of their port, had abandoned the north part of Rhode Island; and that he had made a descent there. I was assured, that he had then not more than two thousand men, and that his situation required prompt succour. A little surprised, I did not hesitate to go and join him myself. Knowing that there are moments, which must be eagerly seized in war, I was cautious of blaming an overthrow of plans, which nevertheless astonished me, *and which in fact merit* in my opinion *only praise*,(qui cependant m'étonnoit, et qui au fond ne mérite selon mon opinion que des éloges,) although accumulated circumstances might have rendered the consequences very unfortunate." From these particulars it would appear, that, whatever might have been his first impressions, he ultimately approved and commended the course adopted by General Sullivan.—*Sparks.*

[1] It would seem, that Governor Johnstone, presuming on his former friendships, had taken very unwarrantable liberties in writing to some of the members of Congress, particularly to Robert Morris, Joseph Reed, and Francis Dana. It being rumored, that letters of an improper tendency had been sent to some of the members, an order was passed, that all letters received by any of the members from the Britinh commissioners, or any subject of the King of Great Britain, should be laid before Congress.—*Journals*, July 9th, Letters from Governor Johnstone to the above members were found objectionable, and deemed worthy of special notice. A message from him to Joseph Reed by Mrs. Ferguson, a lady of character, was also considered a direct attempt to bribe him

it upon any occasion; and I have only to regret, that there has not been the same degree of decision and resolution, in every gentleman as you have used in these instances. If there had, it would not only have contributed much to the tranquillity of the army, but preserved the rights of our own officers. With respect to the brevet commissions, I know many of the French gentlemen have obtained nothing more; that these were intended as merely honorary; and that they are not so objectionable as the other sort. However, these are attended with great inconveniences; for the instant they gain a point upon you, no matter what their primary professions and engagements were, they extend their views, and are incessant in teasing for actual command. The reason for

with the proffer of a large sum of money and a high office in his Majesty's gift. Mr. Reed replied, "that he was not worth purchasing, but such as he was, the King of Great Britain was not rich enough to do it." These particulars were regarded in so unfavorable a light by Congress, that they issued a declaration, containing extracts from the letters and other facts, and accompanied by the resolves: "That the contents of the said paragraphs, and the particulars in the said declaration, in the opinion of Congress, cannot but be considered as direct attempts to corrupt and bribe the Congress of the United States of America; that, as Congress feel, so they ought to demonstrate, the highest and most pointed indignation against such daring and atrocious attempts to corrupt their integrity; that it is incompatible with the honor of Congress to hold any manner of correspondence or intercourse with the said George Johnstone, especially to negotiate with him upon affairs in which the cause of liberty is interested." —See the proceedings in the *Journals of Congress*, August 11th. The letters are contained in the *Remembrancer*, vol. vii., p. 8, *et seq.* Governor Johnstone published a counter declaration vindicating himself, and retired from the commission. In the Stevens Fac-similes is a draught of a declaration by the commissioners concerning this conduct of Governor Johnstone.

In the British Parliament, Governor Johnstone had uniformly professed himself friendly to the Americans. To that circumstance, connected with his conduct as commissioner, General Washington alludes in the closing part of the first paragraph in the above letter.

their pressing for printed commissions in the usual form, in preference to the brevets you give 'em, is obvious. The former are better calculated to favor their schemes, as they impart an idea of real command, and, of consequence, afford them grounds for their future solicitations. I am well pleased with Monsieur Gerard's declaration, and, if he adheres to it, he will prevent many frivolous and unwarrantable applications; for, finding their pursuits not seconded by his interest, many of the gentlemen will be discouraged and relinquish every hope of success. Nor am I insensible of the propriety of your wish respecting our friend, the Marquis. His countrymen soon find access to his heart; and he is but too apt afterwards to interest himself in their behalf, without having a sufficient knowledge of their merit, or a proper regard to their extravagant views. I will be done upon the subject. I am sure you have been severely punished by their importunities as well as myself.

The performance ascribed to Mr. Mauduit is really curious as coming from him, when we consider his past conduct. He is a sensible writer, and his conversion at an earlier day, with many others that have lately happened, might have availed his country much. His reasoning is plain and forcible, and within the compass of every understanding.

I have nothing new to inform you of. My public letter to Congress yesterday contained my last advices from Rhode Island. I hope in a few days, from the high spirits and expectations of General Sullivan, that I shall have the happiness to congratulate you on our success in that quarter. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL NELSON, VIRGINIA.

CAMP, AT THE WHITE PLAINS,
20 August, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,

In what terms can I sufficiently thank you for your polite attention to me, and agreeable present? And, which is still more to the purpose, with what propriety can I deprive you of a valuable and favorite horse? You have pressed me once, nay twice, to accept him as a gift. As a proof of my sincere attachment to, and friendship for, you, I obey, with this assurance, that from none but a gentleman for whom I have the highest regard would I do this, notwithstanding the distressed situation I have been in for the want of one.

I am heartily disappointed at a late resolution of Congress for the discontinuance of your corps, because I pleased myself with the prospect of seeing you, and many other gentlemen of my acquaintance from Virginia in camp. As you had got to Philadelphia, I do not think the saving or difference of expense, (taking up the matter even upon that ground, which, under present circumstances, I think a very erroneous one,) was by any means an object suited to the occasion.[1]

The arrival of the French fleet upon the coast of America is a great and striking event; but the opera-

[1] Congress had passed a resolve on the 2d of March, recommending to the young men of property and spirit in several of the States to form themselves into volunteer troops of light cavalry, to serve at their own expense, except in the articles of provisions and forage, and to join the main army. General Nelson had accordingly come forward with a troop of this description from Virginia to Philadelphia. Congress thanked them for their "brave, generous, and patriotic efforts in the cause of their country"; but the retreat of the enemy to New York had rendered their services unnecessary, and it was recommended to them to return.—*Journals*, August 8th.

tions of it have been injured by a number of unforeseen and unfavorable circumstances, which, though they ought not to detract from the merit and good intention of our great ally, have nevertheless lessened the importance of their services in a great degree. The length of the passage, in the first instance, was a capital misfortune; for had even one of the common length taken place, Lord Howe, with the British ships of war and all the transports in the river Delaware, must inevitably have fallen, and Sir Harry must have had better luck, than is commonly dispensed to men of his profession under such circumstances, if he and his troops had not shared (at least) the fate of Burgoyne. The long passage of Count d'Estaing was succeeded by an unfavorable discovery at the Hook, which hurt us in two respects: first, in a defeat of the enterprise upon New York, the shipping, and troops at that place; and, next, in the delay that was used in ascertaining the depth of water over the bar, which was essential to their entrance into the harbor of New York. And, lastly, after the enterprise upon Rhode Island had been planned, and was in the moment of execution, that Lord Howe with the British ships should interpose merely to create a diversion and draw the French fleet from the Island was again unlucky, as the Count had not returned on the 17th to the Island, tho' drawn off from it the 10th; by which means the land operations were retarded, and the whole subject to a miscarriage in case of the arrival of Byron's squadron.

I do not know what to make of the enemy at New York. Whether their stay at that place is the result

of choice, or the effect of necessity proceeding from an inferiority in the fleet, want of provisions, or other causes, I know not. But certain it is, that, if it is not an act of necessity, it is profoundly mysterious, unless they look for considerable reinforcements, and are waiting the arrival of them to commence their operations. Time will show.

It is not a little pleasing, nor less wonderful to contemplate, that after two years' manœuvring and undergoing the strangest vicissitudes, that perhaps ever attended any one contest since the creation, both armies are brought back to the very point they set out from, and that which was the offending party in the beginning is now reduced to the use of the spade and pickaxe for defence. The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked, that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligations. But it will be time enough for me to turn preacher, when my present appointment ceases; and therefore I shall add no more on the doctrine of Providence; but make a tender of my best respects to your good lady, the secretary, and other friends, and assure you, that, with the most perfect regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

DEAR SIR, CAMP, WHITE PLAINS, 21 August, 1778.

On Wednesday afternoon I received your favor of the 12th instant by Mr. Hulett, the pilot, who did not arrive at camp till then. I am much obliged by your

particular relation of matters, and request that you will continue it from time to time, whenever opportunity will permit. There is one circumstance in your relation, which I was exceedingly sorry to hear.[1] You will readily know which it is. I wish the utmost harmony to prevail, as it is essential to success; and that no occasions may be omitted on your part to cultivate it.

Your operations have been greatly retarded by the late violent storm; but, as it is now over, I trust things will go on prosperously, and that you will be rejoined by Count d'Estaing, who has been kept out so long by it. Indeed, from General Sullivan's letter of the 17th, I flatter myself you will have made a complete reduction of the enemy's force before this reaches you, and that the next advices I receive will announce it. If the fact is otherwise, let me beseech you to guard against sorties and surprises. The enemy, depend upon it, will fall like a strong man, will make many sallies, and endeavor to possess themselves of or destroy your artillery; and should they once put the militia into confusion, the consequences may be fatal.

By a letter, which I received yesterday from General Maxwell, enclosing one from Major Howell, whom I have stationed at Black Point for the purpose of observation, it appears certain, that sixteen of Lord Howe's fleet entered the Hook on the 17th; that on that and the preceding day there had been

[1] Alluding to the differences that had begun to prevail between the American and French officers.

heard severe cannonades at sea, and that it was reported in New York, that a sixty-four gun ship and several transports had been taken by the French squadron. I wish the fact may be so, as to the capture, and that the Count may be with you to give you a narrative of it himself. I cannot learn that Admiral Byron is arrived, nor do I believe that he is. As Major Blodget is in a hurry to proceed, I have not time to add more, than to assure you that I am, with the most perfect esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
28 Augt., 1778—12 o'clock, noon.

DEAR SIR,

I am exceedingly anxious to hear the determination of yourself and the General officers upon the great reverse of your prospects, since the French Fleet left you.[2] I however think it incumbent upon

[1] "If it be practicable and convenient for Congress to furnish me with some specie (gold, as more portable, would be most convenient), valuable purposes I think would result from it. I have always found a difficulty in procuring intelligence by the means of paper money, and I perceive that it increases. The period is critical and interesting, and the early knowledge of an enemy's intention and movements too obvious to need explanation. Having hinted to the committee of Congress when at Valley Forge this want, I address this letter to you *now*, rather as a private than public one; because I do not wish to have the matter again mentioned, if Congress have been apprized of my wants, and find it inconvenient to comply with them."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 25 August, 1778.

[2] After suffering greatly in the storm, the French fleet appeared again off Newport, August 20th. General Greene and the Marquis de Lafayette went on board Count d'Estaing's ship, and endeavored to persuade him to unite again in an attack upon the enemy. A council of war was held, which decided against it. Greene and Lafayette used all their powers of argument and persuasion

me to inform you, that from a variety of intelligence Lord Howe put to sea again on Tuesday. His design no doubt to attempt the relief of Newport, which will be easily effected, either by throwing in a reinforcement or withdrawing the Garrison; as I take it for granted the French Fleet would not have returned, had your protest reached them. I also yesterday received information from Long Island, that looks like a great and general move among the British army. The real intent I have not been able to learn, but I think part of it must be meant to coöperate with their fleet, especially as many transports are drawn into the Sound. You will more than probably have come to a decisive resolution, either to abandon the enterprise, or to attack, long before this reaches you; but, lest you should not, I have given you all the information that I have been able to obtain, that you may judge more fully the propriety of remaining upon the Island under such appearances. The Wind is now contrary, and, if it continues a short time, this will reach you before the transports can, should they be bound eastward.

Suppose you should remove from the Island, I desire you will keep as many of your troops together

to bring about a different result, but without effect. The whole fleet sailed from Rhode Island, and proceeded to Boston harbor for the purpose of repairs. This was a double disappointment and mortification to the American army. Under the present circumstances, and with the momentary expectation of a reinforcement of the enemy, it being impossible to prosecute the siege with any hope of success, General Sullivan withdrew his forces in the night of the 28th of August and marched to the north part of the Island. He was pursued by the enemy, and an action took place the next day. The Americans kept their ground till night, when they retreated to the main land without any molestation from the British.

as you possibly can. We do not know the views of the enemy. Should they be Eastward, you may be able with a force already collected, and the assistance of the Militia, to keep them from making much progress, until a reinforcement from this army would join you, I will just add a hint, which, made use of in time, may prove important, and answer a very salutary purpose. Should the expedition fail, thro' the abandonment of the French Fleet, the officers concerned will be apt to complain loudly. But prudence dictates, that we should put the best face upon the matter, and to the World attribute the removal to Boston to necessity. The Reasons are too obvious to need explaining. The principal one is, that our British and internal enemies would be glad to improve the least matter of complaint and disgust against and between us and our new allies into a serious purpose. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
28 Augt., 1778.

DEAR SIR,

The unfortunate circumstance of the French fleet having left Rhode Island at so critical a moment, I am apprehensive, if not very prudently managed, will have many injurious consequences, besides merely the loss of the advantages we should have reaped from succeeding in the expedition. It will not only tend to discourage the people, and weaken their confidence in our new alliance, but it may possibly pro-

duce prejudices and resentments, which may operate against giving the fleet such zealous and effectual assistance in its present distress, as the exigence of affairs and our true interests demand. It will certainly be sound policy to combat these effects, and, whatever private opinions may be entertained, to give the most favorable construction of what has happened to the public, and at the same time to exert ourselves to put the French fleet, as soon as possible, in a condition to defend itself and be useful to us.

The departure of the fleet from Rhode Island is not yet publicly announced here; but, when it is, I intend to ascribe it to necessity, from the damage suffered in the late storm. This, it appears to me, is the idea, which ought to be generally propagated. As I doubt not the force of those reasons will strike you equally with myself, I would recommend to you to use your utmost influence to palliate and soften matters, and to induce those, whose business it is to provide succors of every kind for the fleet, to employ their utmost zeal and activity in doing it. It is our duty to make the best of our misfortunes, and not to suffer passion to interfere with our interest and the public good.[1]

By several late accounts from New York, there is reason to believe the enemy are on the point of some important movement. They have been some days

[1] "The violent gale which dissipated the two fleets when on the point of engaging, and the withdrawing of the Count d'Estaing to Boston, may appear to us as real misfortunes; but with you I consider storms and victory under the direction of a wise providence who no doubt directs them for the best of purposes, and to bring round the greatest degree of happiness to the greatest number of his people."—*Washington to Governor Trumbull*, 6 September, 1778.

past embarking cannon and other matters. Yesterday an hundred and forty transports fell down to the Hook. These and other circumstances indicate something of moment being in contemplation. Whether they meditate any enterprise against this army, mean to transfer the war elsewhere, or intend to embrace the present opportunity of evacuating the continent, is as yet uncertain. If they have a superior fleet on the coast, it is not impossible they may change the seat of the war to the Eastward, endeavoring by a land and sea coöperation to destroy or possess themselves of the French fleet. With an eye to an event of this kind, I have desired General Sullivan, if he makes good his retreat from the Island, to disband no more of his troops than he cannot help; and I would recommend to you to have an eye to it likewise, and, by establishing signals and using other proper precautions, to put things in a train for calling out your militia at the shortest notice. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

HEAD-QRS., WHITE PLAINS,
1st Sept., 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have not received any letter from you since the 23d Ulto., which I attribute to some mishap of the messengers with whom they were sent. I was anxious to learn the determination and designs of the Council of Officers, that so I might be prepared for eventual measures.—the success or misfortune of your army will have great influence in directing the movement and fortune of this.

The disagreement between the army under your command and the fleet has given me very singular uneasiness.[1] The Continent at large is concerned in

[1] As soon as the French fleet returned to the coast of Rhode Island after its dispersion in the storm, Count d'Estaing wrote the following letter to General Sullivan :

"Our cables were cut, and the fire of the batteries, which we were about to pass to attack the enemy's squadron, had commenced, when I received the letter, which you did me the honor to write on the 9th instant. It was not then possible for me to answer it any otherwise than by pursuing the English fleet, and preventing it from landing any succours. The Count de Cambis has been charged to acquaint you with my present situation, and of the necessity which compels me to go to Boston. I could not myself discharge this melancholy duty, because with a vessel deprived of all her masts, her rudder broken and unshipped, one is extremely uncertain of his destiny. I have nevertheless as yet the consolation of being sufficiently master of it to fulfil the promise verbally made, that I would in any event return to you dead or alive. This promise, and the advantage, which our momentary presence may render to you, have caused me to shut my eyes to all other considerations. In this perhaps I have been imprudent, and my zeal may have blinded me. I have thought that I could not run too great a hazard to prove, in the name of the King, how much his Majesty is attached to his allies; but I should be culpable in my duty to America herself, if I could for a moment think of not preserving a squadron destined for her defence. I regretted to Colonel Fleury, that you should have landed on the Island a day before the time agreed upon between us, and I should be greatly afflicted to know, that you are in danger. I was informed, that you had then only two thousand men. To decide upon your motives is a wrong, which I have not committed. I have refrained from censure; and the twelve thousand men now under your command will probably prove the correctness of the step by a success, which I desire as a citizen, and an admirer of your bravery and talents."—*MS. Letter*, August 21st.

Before this letter was despatched, Count d'Estaing received one from General Sullivan, written the day preceding, and immediately after the squadron appeared, in which he urged the Admiral to unite in an attack upon the enemy. This he answered in a postscript declining the proposal, and giving as his reasons the disabled and dispersed condition of his fleet, the naval strength of the enemy, the chance that reinforcements might at any moment arrive, and the positive orders of the King that, in case of any disaster, or of being pursued by a superior force, his squadron should rendezvous in the harbour of Boston. Greene and Lafayette went on board, and, as we have seen, were unable to change this purpose.

As a last resort the officers bethought themselves of another expedient. A

our cordiality, and it should be kept up by all possible means, consistent with our honor and policy. First impressions you know are generally longest re-

paper was written in the form of a *Protest*, and signed by all the general officers except Lafayette. It was rumored that the Count himself was in favor of remaining at Newport, but that he was overruled by his officers, who had no good-will towards him because he originally belonged to the land service, and were actually in a cabal to ruin him. This was the report; and it was supposed, that a spirited protest of all the American officers might have the effect to change the decision of the council of war. In the meantime the fleet had sailed, and the protest, dated the 22d of August, was sent off by Colonel Laurens, who soon overtook Count d'Estaing's ship. The paper consisted of a recapitulation of the principal arguments against the departure of the French fleet; but unfortunately parts of it were so worded as to give offence, and particularly the closing paragraph. "For the reasons above assigned," say the officers, "we in the most solemn manner protest against the measure, as derogatory to the honor of France, contrary to the intentions of his Most Christian Majesty and to the interests of his nation, destructive in the highest degree of the welfare of the United States, and highly injurious to the alliance formed between the two nations." The performance throughout was marked by a tone of complaint and censure, and was by no means suited to the occasion, and could hardly have been put forth had time been allowed for more cool reflection.

When the protest and the correspondence relating to the subject were read in Congress, it was ordered that their contents should be kept secret, but that the President should communicate them to the French Minister, M. Gerard, informing him at the same time of the injunction of secrecy. It was likewise ordered that General Washington should take every measure in his power to prevent the *Protest* from being made public.—*Secret Journal*, vol. i., p. 89.

Colonel Laurens, in a letter to General Washington, said: "The Count's sensibility was much wounded by the manner in which the American *Protest* was delivered to him. He declared, that this paper imposed on the commander of the King's squadron the painful but necessary law of profound silence." Again, Colonel Laurens added: "I foretold to the Marquis the influence, which the Count's departure from the road of Newport would probably leave upon the minds of the people, and the danger of its reviving those absurd prejudices, which we inherited from the British nation. Unhappily the mischief has become more extensive, by the unguarded expressions of some men of rank, who listened to their chagrin rather than to good policy. Reflection, however, begins to induce a more cautious behavior, and I am in hopes, that the confidence of the people in our new allies will be restored."—*MS. Letter*, September 2d.

membered, and will serve to fix in a great degree our national character among the french. In our conduct towards them we should remember, that they are a people old in war, very strict in military etiquette, and apt to take fire, where others scarcely seem warmed. Permit me to recommend, in the most particular manner, the cultivation of harmony and good agreement, and your endeavors to destroy that ill humor, which may have got into the officers. It is of the greatest importance also, that the minds of the soldiers and the people should know nothing of the misunderstanding, or, if it has reached them, that ways may be used to stop its progress and prevent its effects.

I have received from Congress the enclosed, by which you will perceive their opinions with regard to keeping secret the protest of the general officers. I need add nothing on this head. I have one thing however more to say. I make no doubt but you will do all in your power to forward the repair of the Count's fleet, and rendering it fit for service, by your recommendations for that purpose to those, who can be immediately instrumental. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
1st Sept., 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have had the pleasure of receiving your several letters, the last of which was of the 22d of Augt. I have not now time to take notice of the several argu-

ments, that were made use of for and against the Count's quitting the harbor of Newport, and sailing for Boston. Right or wrong, it will probably disappoint our sanguine expectations of success, and, what I esteem a still worse consequence, I fear it will sow the seeds of dissension and distrust between us and our new allies, unless the most prudent measures are taken to suppress the feuds and jealousies, that have already arisen. I depend much upon your temper and influence to concilliate that animosity, which I plainly perceive, by a letter from the Marquis, subsists between the American officers and the French in our service. This, you may depend, will extend itself to the Count, and the officers and men of his whole Fleet, should they return to Rhode Island; except, upon their arrival there, they find a reconciliation has taken place. The Marquis speaks kindly of a letter from you to him upon this subject. He will therefore take any advice coming from you in a friendly light; and, if he can be pacified, the other French gentlemen will of course be satisfied, as they look up to him as their Head. The Marquis grounds his complaint upon a general order of the 24 of Augt., the latter part of which is certainly very impolitic, and upon the universal clamor that prevailed against the french nation.[1]

[1] After alluding to the departure of the French fleet, and to the disagreeable situation in which the army was left by being thus deserted, the order added. "The General yet hopes the event will prove America able to procure that by her own arms, which her allies refuse to assist in obtaining." Two days afterwards, however, General Sullivan thought it expedient, upon the pressing request of Lafayette, to counteract the impression which this order was found to produce, particularly on the French officers in the army. In the public orders

I beg you will take every measure to keep the protest, entered into by the General Officers, from being made public. The Congress, sensible of the ill consequences that will flow from the World's knowing our differences, have passed a resolve to that purpose. Upon the whole, my dear Sir, you can conceive my meaning better than I can express it; and I therefore fully depend upon your exerting yourself to head all private animosities between our principal officers and the french, and to prevent all illiberal expressions and reflections, that may fall from the army at large.

I have this moment recd. a letter from Genl. Sullivan of the 29th August, in which he barely informs me of an action upon that day, in which he says we had the better, but does not mention particulars.[1]

I am, &c.

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of the 26th of August, he said: "It having been supposed by some persons, that, by the orders of the 24th instant, the Commander-in-chief meant to insinuate, that the departure of the French fleet was owing to a fixed determination not to assist in the present enterprise; and as the General could not wish to give the least color to ungenerous and illiberal minds to make such an unfair interpretation, he thinks it necessary to say, that, as he could not possibly be acquainted with the orders of the French Admiral, he could not determine whether the removal of the fleet was absolutely necessary or not, and therefore did not mean to censure an act, which those orders might render absolutely necessary." This was an awkward explanation, and only proved that the occasion for it should have been avoided.

In a circular to the officers, dated August 23d, requesting their opinion in writing as to the course that should be pursued, General Sullivan said: "The number of our army amounts to eight thousand one hundred and seventy-four, rank and file, exclusive of eight hundred artillerymen, the whole exceedingly well officered; and a reinforcement of three thousand men will probably be here in a few days." So much was the army disheartened, however, that between two and three thousand volunteers went off soon afterwards.

[1] "My last advices from Rhode Island were of the 29th ultimo. General Sullivan informed me by letter of that date, that he had retreated the preced-

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

WHITE PLAINS, 1 September, 1778.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I have been honored by your favor of the 25th ultimo by Monsieur Pontgebaud, and wish my time, which at present is taken up by a committee of Congress, would permit me to go fully into the contents of it. This, however, it is not in my power to do. But in one word let me say, I feel every thing that hurts the sensibility of a gentleman, and consequently upon the present occasion I feel for you and for our good and great allies the French. I feel myself hurt, also, at every illiberal and unthinking reflection, which may have been cast upon the Count d'Estaing, or the conduct of the fleet under his command; and lastly I feel for my country. Let me entreat you, therefore, my dear Marquis, to take no exception at unmeaning expressions, uttered perhaps without consideration, and in the first transport of disappointed hope. Everybody, Sir, who reasons, will acknowledge the advantages which we have derived from the French fleet, and the zeal of the commander of it; but, in a free and republican government, you cannot restrain the voice of the multitude. Every man will speak as he thinks, or, more properly, without attending to the causes. The censures, which have been levelled at the officers of the French fleet, would more than probable have fallen in a much

ing night to the north end of the island; that the enemy pursued him and the next day a warm action ensued which lasted an hour, in which our people obliged them to quit the field in disorder and with precipitation."—*Washington to Governor Clinton*, 1 September, 1778.

higher degree upon a fleet of our own, (if we had one) in the same situation. It is the nature of man to be displeased with every thing, that disappoints a favorite hope or flattering project; and it is the folly of too many of them to condemn without investigating circumstances. Let me beseech you therefore, my good Sir, to afford a healing hand to the wound, that unintentionally has been made. America esteems your virtues and your services, and admires the principles upon which you act. Your countrymen in our army look up to you as their patron. The Count and his officers consider you as a man high in rank, and high in estimation here and also in France; and I, your friend, have no doubt but you will use your utmost endeavors to restore harmony, that the honor, glory, and mutual interest of the two nations may be promoted and cemented in the firmest manner. I would say more on the subject, but am restrained for want of time; and therefore shall only add, that, with every sentiment of esteem and regard, I am, my dear Marquis, &c.[1]

[1] Before the retreat of General Sullivan from Newport, it was thought advisable to make one more effort to persuade Count d'Estaing to return, and, at the pressing solicitations of the board of general officers, Lafayette went to Boston for that purpose. He made the utmost despatch, in going and returning, but he did not reach the army again till the night after the battle. "That there has been an action fought," he said, in writing to General Washington, "where I could have been, and where I was not, is a thing which will seem as extraordinary to you, as it seems to myself." He arrived while the army was evacuating the island, and just in time to bring off the rear pickets, which he performed in a manner that gained him applause. Congress passed a resolve, thanking General Sullivan and the officers and troops under his command for their conduct in the action and retreat; and the president was specially "requested to inform the Marquis de Lafayette, that Congress have a due sense of the sacrifice he made of his personal feelings in undertaking a journey to Boston, with

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QRS., WHITE PLAINS,
4 September, 1778.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your favors of the 28th and that of the 30th ulto., with the several enclosures to which they refer.

Congress may rely, that I will use every possible means in my power to conciliate any differences, that may have arisen in consequence of the Count d'Estaing's going to Boston, and to prevent a publication of the protest upon the occasion. Several days before the receipt of the Resolution, I had written to the Eastward, urging the necessity of harmony, and the expediency of affording the Admiral every assistance to refit his ships. This I repeated after the resolution came to hand; and I have also taken opportunities to request all the general officers here to place the matter in the most favorable point of view, whenever they hear it mentioned.

The Five Hundred Guineas, which Congress were pleased to order, came safe to hand, and shall be appropriated to the purposes they intended, and as the exigency of the service may require. For want of

a view of promoting the interests of these States, at a time when an occasion was daily expected of his acquiring glory in the field; and that his gallantry in going on Rhode Island when the greatest part of the army had retreated, and his good conduct in bringing off the pickets and out-sentries, deserve their particular approbation."—*Journals*, September 9th.

Lafayette had advised retreating from Newport. On the 24th of August he gave his opinion in writing to General Sullivan as follows: "I do not approve of continuing the siege. The time of the militia is out, and they will not longer sacrifice their private interest to the common cause. A retreat is the wisest step."

supplies of this sort, we have been very deficient in intelligence in many important and interesting points. In some cases, no consideration in paper money has been found sufficient to effect even an engagement to procure it; and, where it has been otherwise, the terms of service, on account of the depreciation, have been high, if not exorbitant.

The designs of the Enemy, as to their future movements, remain yet entirely unfolded; but the expectation of their leaving the continent is daily decreasing. The hurricane season seems opposed to their going to the West Indies; and the passage to Europe in a little time will become more and more dangerous. Besides these, there is another circumstance, of some weight if true, to induce a belief that they mean to stay. It appears by the papers, that part of the Regiments lately raised in Britain are ordered to Halifax. If the troops here were intended to be recalled, it would seem that some of them would be sent to reinforce that Garrison sooner than troops from England or Scotland; and hence I think it may be presumed, that another Campaign will take place in America, especially if administration are disappointed in their expectations from the commission.

Where the theatre of war may be, must be a matter of conjecture. But, as it is an acknowledged fact, that an army acting in the Eastern States must derive flour for its support from those more western, I submit to Congress the expediency, and in my opinion the necessity, of establishing, without loss of time, magazines of this article at convenient places removed

from the Sound in Connecticut and Massachusetts. I am the more induced to wish an early consideration of this point, as, by a sudden move of the army, (should events make it necessary,) the departments of commissary and quartermaster would be greatly distressed. Nor would such magazines, I should imagine, be attended with any considerable loss, though the army should not operate in that quarter, as the flour would answer occasionally for our shipping, and the surplus might, in all probability, be otherwise readily disposed of.

I take the liberty of transmitting to Congress, a memorial I received from the Reverend Mr. Tetard. From the certificates annexed to it, he appears to be a man of great merit, and from every account he has suffered in the extreme, in the present contest. His attachment, services and misfortunes seem to give him a claim to a generous notice; but according to the now establishment of the army, it is not in my power to make any provision for him. I therefore recommend his case to the attention and consideration of Congress.

Six o'clock, P.M.—I this minute received a Letter from General Sullivan, of which the Enclosure No. 2 is a copy. I shall be exceedingly happy, if a perfect reconciliation has taken place between him and the Count, and all the officers. His Letter will show some of the reasons, that led to the protest, and that it was the hope of our officers, that it would have operated as a justification to the Admiral to return, against the sentiments of his council, especially as it

coincided, it is said, with his own inclination. I had these reasons from another hand when the protest first came.

I was duly honored yesterday evening, with your favor of the 31st Ulto. Tho' it is not expressed in the Resolution of that date, that any other bounty is to be given to the men, who engage for three years or during the war, than Twenty Dollars, I shall take it for granted they are to receive the usual allowance of Cloathing and Lands. There are several Continental Troops whose time of service will expire at the end of the fall or during the Winter. I shall consider these within the meaning and operation of the Resolve, tho' they are not mentioned—and shall direct every necessary measure to be taken to reinlist them. From the exorbitant State, Town and Substitute bounties, I am very doubtful whether Twenty Dollars will be found sufficient to engage so great a proportion either of the Draughts or Continentals, as was at first apprehended. Our failure in the enterprize against Rhode Island will have its weight and every day, from the approach of the fall and Winter, will add new difficulties. As it is a work of the most essential importance, I will order it to be begun, the instant the Money arrives; and lest on experiment the sum should prove too small I would submit it to Congress, whether it will not be expedient to pass another Resolve, authorizing a further bounty of Ten Dollars, to be used as circumstances may make it necessary. This can remain a secret, and will not be carried into execution, but in case

of evident necessity. I feel very much interested upon the occasion, and have submitted this mode, that there may not be the least possible delay in attempting to engage the men, under a second expedient, if the first should not succeed. The Articles of Cloathing and blankets should also employ the utmost attention to provide them. We are now in great want, particularly of the latter, there not being less than ———— actually wanted at this moment. I have, &c.

P. S. The return of Blankets has not come in and therefore I cannot ascertain the deficiency by this conveyance.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
5 September, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I was yesterday favored with your letter of the 31st ulto. The one you allude to, came to hand about five days before.

I thank you much for your very polite and friendly appeal, upon the subject of half-bounty in solid coin.[1] The measure, I have no doubt, would produce an instant benefit, so far as the engaging of drafts might be concerned. But I am certain that many mischiev-

[1] The Continental bounty for each recruit who enlisted for three years or during the war was twenty dollars. It had been proposed by some of the members of Congress to pay one half in specie, and the other half in paper currency. The idea was abandoned in consequence of the above representations of the Commander-in-chief. But Congress voted an augmentation of ten dollars to the bounty already given, which was to be applied in such cases as General Washington should deem expedient.—*Journals*, September 8th.

ous and pernicious consequences would flow from it. It would have a tendency to depreciate our paper money, which is already of no value, and give rise to infinite difficulties and irremovable inconveniences. Nothing after this would do but gold or silver. All would demand it, and none would consider the impracticability of its being furnished. The soldiers, seeing the manifest difference in the value between that and our paper, and that the former would procure at least five or six fold as much as the latter, would become dissatisfied. They would reason upon the subject, and, in fine, cast their views to desertion at least, as a very probable and the only expedient from whence it might be derived, and similar and greater advantages arise. As the express is now waiting, I will not enter upon a long detail, or into an enumeration of the evils, that would result from the grant. I am satisfied they would be many, and of an obstinate and injurious kind, and that they would far overbalance, in their operation and effect, any present good. We have no prospect of procuring gold and silver to discharge more than a mere scruple of our demands. It is therefore our interest and truest policy, to give a currency to fix a value, as far as it may be practicable, upon all occasions, upon that which is to be the medium of our internal commerce and the support of the war. I am, &c.[1]

[1] Washington wrote to Richard Henry Lee on the same subject as follows: —"An advance in silver dollars, of part of the bounty money, might facilitate the business of recruiting; but I conceive, that it would be attended with very pernicious consequences; not from the cause you speak of, to wit, discontenting other soldiers, but from another source, namely, opening the eyes of the

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 11th Septem., 1778.

SIR,

I have had the honor of receiving your Letter of the 5th inst., accompanied by a Copy of two Letters to Congress and Genl. Sullivan. The confidence, which you have been pleased to show in communicating these papers, engages my sincere thanks. If the deepest regret, that the best concerted enterprise and bravest exertions should have been rendered fruitless by a disaster, which human prudence is incapable of foreseeing or preventing, can alleviate disappointment, you may be assured, that the whole Continent sympathizes with you. It will be a consolation to you to reflect, that the thinking part of mankind do not form their judgment from events; and that their equity will ever attach equal glory to those actions, which deserve success, as to those which have been crowned with it. It is in the trying circumstances to which Your Excellency has been exposed, that the virtues of a great mind are displayed in their brightest lustre, and that the General's Character is better known, than in the moment of Victory. It was yours,

whole and setting them to reasoning upon the difference between specie and paper. At present they know, that every comfort and necessary of life is insufferably dear, but do not inquire much after the causes; and, having no specie among them to fix the comparison, they do not attribute it to the depreciation of the paper money; but let them have ocular proof, that they can purchase as much with one silver as with four or five paper dollars, and have forestallers and the disaffected at work among them in purchasing up the specie, while the latter class of people are painting in lively colors the difference, and using at the same time every art in their power to poison their minds and sow the seeds of discontent, and then judge of the event. At any rate, I think the experiment would be dangerous, and ought not to be tried but as the dernier resort, lest by obviating one evil a greater be involved."—September 23d.

by every title which can give it; and the adverse element, which robbed you of your prize, can never deprive you of the Glory due to you. Tho' your success has not been equal to your expectations, yet you have the satisfaction of reflecting, that you have rendered essential services to the common cause.

I exceedingly lament, that, in addition to our misfortunes, there has been the least suspension of harmony and good understanding between the generals of allied nations, whose views must, like their interests, be the same. On the first intimation of it, I employed my influence in restoring what I regard as essential to the permanence of an Union founded on mutual inclination, and the strongest ties of reciprocal advantage. Your Excellency's offer to the Council of Boston had a powerful tendency to promote the same end, and was a distinguished proof of your zeal and magnanimity.[1]

[1] When Lafayette arrived in Boston from Rhode Island, Count d'Estaing's fleet had just entered the outer harbor. The Council of Massachusetts was convened, and a conference was held between that body and the Count d'Estaing and Lafayette, on the subjects of providing for the fleet and of reinforcing General Sullivan's army. Count d'Estaing wrote to Washington: "I offered and was ready, at the head of a regiment, to go and serve under General Sullivan, as I formerly did under Marshal Saxe, in the war which terminated in 1748. I should not have taken this step with the idea of strengthening an army with such a handful of men, nor of proving what is already known, that the French nation can sacrifice life with a good grace; but I was anxious to demonstrate, that my countrymen could not be offended by a sudden expression of feeling, and that he, who had the honor of commanding them in America, was and would be at all times one of the most devoted and zealous servants of the United States."—*MS. Letter*, September 5th.

Count d'Estaing likewise wrote a letter to General Sullivan, of which Lafayette was the bearer, and in which the Count alluded to the protest only by saying that it was of such a nature as to impose on the commander of the king's squadron the necessity of passing it over in silence. He then mentioned the pro-

The present Superiority of the enemy in naval force must for a time suspend all plans of offensive coöperation between us. It is not easy to foresee what change may take place by the arrival of Succours to you from Europe, or what opening the enemy may give you to resume your activity. In this moment, therefore, every consultation on this subject would be premature. But it is of infinite importance, that we should take all the means that our circumstances will allow for the defence of a Squadron, which is so pretious to the common cause of france and America, and which may have become a capital object with the enemy. Whether this really is the case, can be only matter of conjecture. The original intention of the reinforcement sent to Rhode island was obviously the relief of the Garrison at that post. I have to lament, that, tho' seasonably advised of the movement, it was utterly out of my power to counteract it. A naval force alone could have defeated the attempt. How far their views may since have been enlarged, by the arrival of Byron's fleet, Your Excellency will be best able to judge. Previous to this event, I believe Genl. Clinton was waiting orders from his court for the

posal he had made to the Council, adding that no offence had been given, which, under the circumstances of the case, would affect his conduct. "To prove this," said he, "is one of the strongest motives, which has determined me to place myself under your orders, as soon as I shall have been honored with a positive answer from the Council. My opinion upon the measures to be taken need never restrain yours. It shall not only be subject to yours, but even remain unrevealed whenever you shall not require me to give it."—August 29th. Here this unpleasant affair terminated, as the battle of Rhode Island put an end to any further operations in that quarter.

conduct he was to pursue; in the meantime embarking his Stores and heavy baggage, in order to be the better prepared for a prompt evacuation, if his instructions should require it.[1]

But as the present posture of affairs may induce a change of operations, and tempt them to carry the war eastward for the ruin of your Squadron, it will be necessary for us to be prepared to oppose such an enterprise. I am unhappy, that our situation will not admit of our contributing more effectually to this important end; but assure you, at the same time, that whatever can be attempted without losing sight of objects equally essential to the interest of the two nations, shall be put in execution.

A Candid view of our affairs, which I am going to exhibit, will make you a judge of the difficulties under which we labor. Almost all our supplies of flour, and no inconsiderable part of our meat, are drawn from the States westward of Hudson's River. This renders a secure communication across the River indispensably necessary, both to the support of your Squadron and the Army. The enemy being masters of that navigation, would interrupt this essential intercourse between the States. They have been sensible of these advantages; and by the attempts, which they have made, to bring about a Separation

[1] General Clinton had received full instructions, before he left Philadelphia, dated March 21st. He was ordered to send five thousand men with the greatest secrecy and despatch to the West Indies, for the purpose of attacking St. Lucia. This was delayed for the want of transports, and the necessary ships for a convoy, particularly after the arrival of Count d'Estaing's fleet. This order being unknown to Washington, the preparations for executing it were suspected to indicate a design of evacuating the city.

of the Eastern from the Southern States, and the facility, which their superiority by Sea has hitherto given them, have always obliged us, besides garrisoning the Forts that immediately defend the passage, to keep a force at least equal to that, which they have had posted in New York and its dependencies.

It is incumbent upon us at this time to have a greater force in this quarter than usual, from the concentered State of the enemy's strength, and the uncertainty of their designs. In addition to this, it is to be observed, that they derive an inestimable advantage from the facility of transporting their troops from one point to another. These rapid movements enable them to give us uneasiness for remote, unguarded parts, in attempting to succor which we should be exposed to ruinous marches, and after all perhaps be the dupes of a feint.—if they could, by any demonstration in another part, draw out attention and strength from this important point, and, by anticipating our return, possess themselves of it, the consequences would be fatal. Our dispositions must, therefore, have equal regard to coöperating with you in a defensive plan, and securing the North River; which the remoteness of the two objects from each other renders peculiarly difficult. Immediately upon the change, which happened in your naval affairs, my attention was directed to conciliating these two great ends. The necessity of transporting magazines, collected relatively to our present position, and making new arrangements for ulterior operations, has hitherto been productive of delay. These points are now

nearly accomplished, and I hope in a day or two to begin a general movement of the Army eastward. As a commencement of this, one division marched this morning under Major-General Gates towards Danbury, and the rest of the army will follow as speedily as possible.

The following is a general idea of my disposition. The army will be thrown into several divisions, one of which, consisting of a force equal to the Enemy's in New York, will be posted about thirty miles in the rear of my present camp, and in the vicinity of the North River, with a view to its defence; the other will be pushed on at different stages as far towards Connecticut River, as can be done consistently with preserving a communication, and having them within supporting distance of each other, so as that, when occasion may require, they may form a junction, either for their own immediate defence, or to oppose any attempts, that may be made on the North River. The facility which the enemy have of collecting their whole force, and turning it against any point they choose, will restrain us from extending ourselves so far as will either expose us to be beaten by detachment, or endanger the Security of the North River.

This disposition will place the American forces as much in measure for assisting in the defence of your Squadron, and the Town of Boston, as is compatible with the other great objects of our care. It does not appear to me probable, that the enemy would hazard the penetrating of Boston by land, with the force which they at present have to the eastward. I am

rather inclined to believe, that they will draw together their whole Land and Naval Strength, to give the greater probability of Success. In order to do this, New York must be evacuated; an event, which cannot take place without being announced by circumstances impossible to conceal; and I have reason to hope that the time, which must necessarily be exhausted in embarking and transporting their troops and Stores, would be sufficient for me to advance a considerable part of my army in a posture for opposing them.

The observations which Your Excellency makes relative to the necessity of having intelligent spies, are perfectly just—every measure that circumstances would admit has been to answer this valuable end—and our intelligence has in general been as good as could be expected from the situation of the Enemy. The distance at which we are from our posts of observations in the first instance, and the long Journey which is afterwards to be performed before a letter can reach Your Excellency hinder my communicating intelligence with such celerity as I could wish.—

The letter which I sent giving an account of Lord Howe's movements was despatched as soon as the fact was ascertained but it did not arrive 'till you had gone to sea, in pursuit of the british Squadron—

As Your Excellency does not mention the letters I last had the honor of writing to you, I am apprehensive of some delay or miscarriage—their dates were the 3d & 4th inst.

The sincere esteem and regard which I feel for

Your Excellency, make me set the highest value upon every expression of friendship with which you are pleased to honor me—I entreat you to accept the most cordial return on my part—I shall count it a singular felicity if in the course of possible operations above alluded to, personal intercourse shd. afford me the means of cultivating a closer intimacy with you, and of proving more particularly the respect and attachment with which

I have, &c.

P. S. My dispatches were going to be closed when Your Excellency's Letter of the 8th was delivered to me.

The state of Byron's Fleet from the best intelligence I have been able to obtain, is as follows:

Six Ships, the names of which are mentioned in the paper I had the honor of transmitting the 3d—have arrived at New York, with Crews in very bad health.

Two vizt. The Cornwall of 74 and Monmouth of 64, had joined Lord Howe—*two*, one of which the Admiral's Ship, were missing. One had put back to Portsmouth.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
12th Sept., 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Yours of the 10th came to hand late last night. The intentions of the enemy are yet very mysterious. From the expression of your letter, I take it for granted, that General Grey had embarked again after

destroying Bedford; and by his hovering about the Coast, and Lord Howe's coming round again to Newport, I cannot but think, that they mean something more than a diversion or deception. The destruction of the Count d'Estaing's Fleet is an object of the greatest magnitude; but as that cannot be easily effected, while they lay in the harbor of Boston, without a coöperation by land and water, I am apprehensive, that they mean to possess themselves of such grounds in the neighborhood of Boston, as will enable them to carry such a plan into execution. Whether they would do this by landing at a distance, and marching thro' the Country, or by possessing themselves at once of part of the harbor, I cannot determine. I must therefore recommend it to you to keep the strictest watch upon the motions of the Enemy, and if you find them inclining towards Boston, endeavor, with your own force and what you can collect upon the occasion, to prevent them from taking such position as will favor their designs upon the Fleet.

Upon a supposition, that the Enemy mean to operate to the eastward, I have already advanced three Brigades some distance from the main Body of the army, ready to move forward, should there be occasion; and I intend to place the whole in such a position in a day or two, that they may either march to the Eastward, or be within supporting distance of the posts upon the North River, as appearances may require.[1]

[1] "I was the more induced to come to this determination, as most of the accounts from New York seemed to lead to a belief, as they still do, that a

I shall govern myself chiefly in my motions by the advices I receive from you. I therefore most earnestly entreat you to be very clear and explicit in your information, and to let me hear from you every day —Tho' there may be nothing material to communicate yet it relieves me from a state of anxiety, which a suspension of intelligence naturally creates.

I would not have you attempt, in the present situation of affairs to divide your force too much in order to cover every part of the Country, and as the Enemy have now the superiority by sea, I recommend it to you by all means to keep out of Necks or narrow pieces of land with any considerable Bodies of Men. Small guards posted at the most likely places of descent are all that ought to be expected from you. In one of my late letters I mentioned the necessity of taking the public Arms out of the Hands of the disbanded militia. I cannot help repeating the necessity again, because I find our public Magazines are unable to supply the wants of the Army, notwithstanding the great importations of last year.

Be pleased to forward my letter to Count d'Estaing with the greatest expedition, to whom be pleased to communicate every move of the enemy by land or water, as far as they come under your observation. I am, &c.

considerable movement was and is in contemplation, if not an entire evacuation of the city, and this by water. Besides these reasons, the principal objects for taking post here do not now exist. One was to create every possible jealousy in favor of the expedition against Rhode Island; another, the consuming of the forage within its vicinity and towards Kingsbridge. The former is now over, and the latter in a great degree accomplished."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 12 September, 1778.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITE PLAINS,
12 September, 1778.

SIR,

Enclosed I have the honor to transmit Congress a copy of a report of a Board of officers, who were appointed by me to consider what would be the most eligible plan for invading Canada, in case our future prospects and circumstances should justify the enterprise. The pains, which General Gates has for some time past taken to inform himself on the subject, and the knowledge which General Bayley and Col. Hazen possess of the country, induced me to make choice of these gentlemen.[1] It appears to me, that the mode recommended by them for an expedition of this kind is liable to fewest objections, and, though attended

[1] Washington addressed the following questions to Brigadier-General Bayley, and asked for full information:

"What force is now in arms in that country? [Canada.]

"If any reinforcements have arrived in Canada the Summer past, & any expected this season?

"In what state of defence are the garrisons, & how are the Troops posted in that Country?

"Are any Canadians in arms there; if so, are they compelled to it, or is it from their own choice, & what number?

"The General sentiments of the people with respect to American Politics, and that of the Clergy in particular?

"The disposition of the Indians in the neighborhood of Canada?

"Who is Governor and principal magistrates in that Country?

"If there is a plentiful or short crop there, and what may be the price of grain?

"Have the Canadians been disarmed by any authority from Government or not?

"Whether Canadians would chuse to unite with the Independent States of America?"

On the 29th October Washington could write to Greene: "We may conclude that nothing can be done towards the Canada expedition this winter."

with many difficulties, affords a reasonable prospect of success. The great naval force of the enemy on the lakes is, in my opinion, an almost insurmountable obstacle to any attempt to penetrate by the ordinary communication.

The expediency of the undertaking, in a military point of view, will depend on the enemy's evacuating these States, and on the reinforcements they may send into Canada. While they keep their present footing, we shall find employment enough in defending ourselves, without meditating conquests; or, if they send a large addition of strength into that country, it may require greater force and more abundant supplies, on our part, to effect its reduction, than our resources may perhaps admit. But if they should leave us, and their other exigencies should oblige them to neglect Canada, we may derive essential advantages from a successful expedition there; and if it should be thought advisable, there is no time to be lost in making preparations, particularly if the idea of carrying it on in the Winter be pursued.

The great importance of the object, both in a military and political light, demands the sanction and concurrence of Congress before any steps can be taken towards it with propriety. The peculiar preparations, which will be necessary from the peculiar nature of the enterprise, is an additional motive with me for requesting thus early their determination, as a considerable expense must be incurred in procuring several articles, which would not be requisite but on this occasion. The soldiery must be clad

in a particular manner, to fit them for enduring the inclemencies of an active winter campaign; a number of snow-shoes must be provided, and extraordinary means of transportation, to convey our stores and baggage through a country covered with snow, and a great part of it hitherto unexplored.

Congress will perceive, that valuable magazines both of provisions and forage may be laid up in the upper settlements on Connecticut River. I have given directions for this purpose, because if the expedition in question should be carried into execution, they will be indispensable; if it should not, they will still be very beneficial for supplying the army, especially if the war should be transferred Eastward, which there are many powerful reasons to expect. I shall not trouble Congress with more extensive details on the subject, as Colonel Hazen, who will have the honor of delivering this, will be able to satisfy any inquiries they may be pleased to make. I am, with the greatest esteem, &c.[1]

TO HENRY LAURENS.

WHITE PLAINS, Sept. 12, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

A few days ago I wrote in haste a letter to you by Major Morris, and took the liberty of returning the gold you were so obliging as to send me by Jones. For your kind intention of forwarding that sum, and goodness in bringing Congress acquainted with my want of specie, you will please to accept my sincere

[1] Read in Congress September 15th. Referred to Mr. Lee and Mr. Drayton.

and hearty thanks, These are also due to you for your polite attention in forwarding, for my perusal, the late exhibitions of Governor Johnstone and his brethren in commission. That of the former is really a curious performance. He tries to convince you that he is not at all hurt by, or offended at, the interdiction of Congress, and that he is not in a passion; while he exhibits abundant proof that he is cut to the quick and biting his fingers in an agony of passion.

Your letter to Col. Laurens respecting Mons. Galvan was forwarded to Rhode Island while he was on his return from Boston, by which means he missed it. This gentleman (if he may be so called, Mons. Galvan) waited on me a few days ago, and met with the reception due to his merit and conduct to you. The beginning of the next paragraph of that letter excited my curiosity to pursue it to the end, and to my shame, was reminded of my inattention to your favor of the 18th of June, which coming to hand upon my march through Jersey, and being laid by to be acknowledged at a time of more leisure, was entirely forgot till your inquiry after the letters from Messrs. Oswald and Manning recalled it to my recollection. I now return these letters, together with Gov. Johnstone's, and a tender of my thanks for the favor of perusing them. I am convinced that no apology can be more agreeable to you, in excuse for my neglect, than a plain narrative of the truth, and this I have offered.

I am sorry to find by your favor of 29th ult. that Mons. Gerard was indisposed. I hope his disorder

was not of long continance and that he is now perfectly recovered. Having often heard this gentleman spoken of as a well-wisher to, and promoter of the rights of, America, I have placed him among the number of those we ought to revere. Should you see no impropriety in my (being a stranger to Mons. Gerard) presenting compliments to him, I would give you trouble of doing this; and of assuring him, that I could wish to be considered (by him) as one of his admirers.

TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

FREDERICKSBURG, 23 September, 1778.

DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter of the 30th ultimo came to my hands a few days ago, and gave me the pleasure of hearing that you were all well, and an opportunity of congratulating you on the birth of a grandchild, though you do not say whether it be a male or female.

The proceedings of the general court-martial, in the case of General Lee, having lain with Congress ever since the 20th of last month for their approbation or disapprobation; and why it is yet undecided upon, I know no more than you; and therefore I shall not hazard a conjecture, as it has been my aim, from the beginning, to avoid saying any thing upon the subject, till it came properly before the public.

To say any thing, at this late hour, of the proceedings against Rhode Island, would be but mere repetitions of narratives, with which all the newspapers are filled. The whole may be summed up in a few words,

and amounts to this: that an unfortunate storm (so it appeared, and yet ultimately it may have happened for the best,) and some measures taken in consequence of it by the French Admiral, perhaps unavoidably, blasted in one moment the fairest hopes that ever were conceived; and, from a moral certainty of success, rendered it a matter of rejoicing to get our own troops safe off the Island. If the garrison of that place, consisting of nearly six thousand men, had been captured, as there was, in appearance at least, a hundred to one in favor of it, it would have given the finishing blow to British pretensions of sovereignty over this country; and would, I am persuaded, have hastened the departure of the troops in New York, as fast as their canvass wings could carry them away. What their present designs are, I know not. They are busily preparing, however, for something. Whether to operate against our posts in the Highlands and this army, whether for a remove eastwardly, and by a junction of their land and naval forces to attempt the destruction of the French fleet at Boston, and the repossession of that town, or whether to leave us altogether, for the purpose of reinforcing Canada, Nova Scotia, and their Islands, are matters yet to be determined. Many circumstances indicate a general movement, whilst others point out a partial one only; so that it is next to impossible to form a decided opinion of their plan. In short, my conception of the matter is, that they have none, but are waiting the orders of the administration, who were weak and wicked enough to expect something from their commission-

ers; preparing, in the mean while, for their departure, if that should, instead of Lord North's ultimatum, be the determination; or for some vigorous effort, if coercion continue to be their plan.

There are but two capital objects, which they can have in view, except the defeat and dispersion of this army; and those are the possession of the fortifications in the Highlands, by which means the communication between the eastern and southern States would be cut off, and the destruction of the French fleet at Boston. These objects being far apart, render it very difficult to secure the one effectually without exposing the other eminently. I have, therefore, in order to do the best that the nature of the case will admit, strengthened the works, and reinforced the garrison in the Highlands, and thrown the army into such positions, as to move eastward, or westward as circumstances may require. The place I now date from is about thirty miles from the fort on the North River; and I have some troops nearer, and others farther off, but all on the road leading to Boston, if we should be dragged that way.[1]

[1] "The army marched from White Plains on the 16th inst., and is now encamped in different places. Three brigades, composing the Virginia troops, part of the right wing, under the command of Genl. Putnam, are at Robinson's near West Point, and two brigades more, composing the remainder, are with Baron de Kalb at Fishkill Plains, about ten miles from the town on the road leading to Sharon. The second line with Lord Stirling is in the vicinity of Fredericksburg; and the whole of the left wing at Danbury under the command of General Gates. These several posts appear to be the best we can occupy in the present doubtful state of things, as they have relation to the support of West Point, in case of an attack in that quarter, and are also on the communication to the eastward, if the enemy point their operations that way. Besides these dispositions, Gen'l Scott with a light corps, remains below, in the

Offer my compliments and congratulations to the young couple on the increase of their family, and my love to my sister and the rest of the family, and be assured that, with every sentiment of affection, I am, etc.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

FREDERICKSBURG, 25 September, 1778.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Since my last to you, I have been honored with your several favors of the 1st, 3d, and 21st of this month. The two first came to hand before I left the White Plains, and the last at this place. * * *

The sentiments of affection and attachment, which breathe so conspicuously in all your letters to me, are at once pleasing and honorable, and afford me abundant cause to rejoice at the happiness of my acquaint-

County about King's Street."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 23 September, 1778.

"There is a point which I wish to mention to you, and I shall be glad if it coincides with your own inclination. If the movements of the enemy make it necessary for the main body of the army to proceed to the eastward, there will still remain a considerable command for the defence and security of the Highland posts. This, from several resolutions of Congress heretofore upon the subject, and from several other considerations, it seems to me will be proper for you. It will and must extend to the forces employed above and on the frontiers of this State, and I am persuaded that you will be agreeable to the views and wishes of Congress. But if this could not be supposed to be the case, there is another circumstance which appears to render your remaining in this department extremely necessary. This State, I am authorized to say, dislike General Putnam, and not reposing confidence in him, they will be uneasy if he should be left to command."—*Washington to Gates*, 26 September, 1778.

"From the beginning of the war I devoted myself to the service of the United States; and while I continue to serve, I shall cheerfully obey all orders from Congress, your Excellency, or any my superior officer: Your Excellency has therefore only to signify your commands, to have them instantly obeyed. —*Gates to Washington*, 27 September, 1778.

ance with you. Your love of liberty, the just sense you entertain of this valuable blessing, and your noble and disinterested exertions in the cause of it, added to the innate goodness of your heart, conspire to render you dear to me; and I think myself happy in being linked with you in bonds of the strictest friendship.

The ardent zeal, which you have displayed during the whole course of the campaign to the eastward, and your endeavors to cherish harmony among the officers of the allied powers, and to dispel those unfavorable impressions, which had begun to take place in the minds of the unthinking, (from misfortunes, which the utmost stretch of human foresight could not avert,) deserves, and now receives, my particular and warmest thanks. I am sorry for Monsieur Tousard's loss of an arm in the action on Rhode Island; and offer my thanks to him, through you, for his gallant behavior on that day.[1]

Could I have conceived, that my picture had been an object of your wishes, or in the smallest degree worthy of your attention, I should, while Mr. Peale was in camp at Valley Forge, have got him to have taken the best portrait of me he could, and presented it to you; but I really had not so good an opinion of my own worth, as to suppose that such a compliment

[1] M. Tousard was a French office attached to the family of the Marquis de Lafayette. In the action on Rhode Island he rushed forward very courageously in advance of the troops, when an attempt was made to take a cannon, and found himself surrounded by the enemy. His horse was killed under him, and he lost his right arm, but escaped from capture. As a reward for this brave act, Congress granted him the rank of lieutenant-colonel by brevet, and a pension of thirty dollars a month for life.—*Journals*, October 27th.

would not have been considered as a greater instance of my vanity, than a mean of your gratification; and, therefore, when you requested me to sit to Monsieur Lanfang, I thought it was only to obtain the outlines and a few shades of my features, to have some prints struck from.[1]

If you have entertained thoughts, my dear Marquis, of paying a visit to your court, to your lady, and to your friends this winter, but waver on account of an expedition into Canada, friendship induces me to tell you, that I do not conceive that the prospect of such an operation is so favorable at this time, as to cause you to change your views. Many circumstances and events must transpire to render an enterprise of this kind practicable and advisable. The enemy, in the first place, must either withdraw wholly, or in part, from their present posts, to leave us at liberty to detach largely from this army. In the next place, if considerable reinforcements should be thrown into that country, a winter's expedition would become impracticable, on account of the difficulties, which will attend the march of a large body of men, with the necessary apparatus, provisions, forage, and stores, at the inclement season. In a word, the

[1] Mr. Hancock had presented Count d'Estaing with a copy of General Washington's portrait at Boston, and had promised another to Lafayette.

"Thursday, the 26th November next is appointed by authority to be observed as a day of Thanksgiving, Prayer and Praise throughout this State. Monday, se'ennight a large company of gentlemen and ladies dined on board the Languedoc at the invitation of Count d'Estaing. The entertainment was highly elegant. A picture of General Washington at full length, lately presented to the Count by General Hancock, was placed at the centre of the upper side of the room, the frame of which was covered with laurels."—*Letter from a Gentleman on Rhode Island*, in *Pennsylvania Packet*, 10 November, 1778.

chances are so much against the undertaking, that they ought not to induce you to lay aside your other purpose, in the prosecution of which you shall have every aid, and carry with you every honorable testimony of my regard and entire approbation of your conduct, that you can wish. But as it is a compliment, which is due, so I am persuaded you would not wish to dispense with the form, of signifying your desires to Congress on the subject of your voyage and absence.

I come now, in a more especial manner, to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging favor of the 21st by Major Dubois, and to thank you for the important intelligence therein contained. I do most cordially congratulate you on the glorious defeat of the British squadron under Admiral Keppel, an event which reflects the highest honor on the good conduct and bravery of Monsieur d'Orvilliers and the officers of the fleet under his command; at the same time that it is to be considered, I hope, as the happy presage of a fortunate and glorious war to his Most Christian Majesty. A confirmation of the account I shall impatiently wait and devoutly wish for. If the Spaniards, under this favorable beginning, would unite their fleet to that of France, together they would soon humble the pride of haughty Britain, and no longer suffer her to reign sovereign of the seas, and claim the privilege of giving law to the main. * * *

You have my free consent to make the Count d'Estaing a visit, and may signify my entire approbation

of it to General Sullivan, who, I am glad to find, has moved you out of a *cul de sac.*[1] It was my advice to him long ago to have no detachments in that situation, let particular places be never so much unguarded and exposed from the want of troops. Immediately upon my removal from the White Plains to this ground, the enemy threw a body of troops into the Jerseys; but for what purpose, unless to make a grand forage, I have not been able yet to learn. They advanced some troops at the same time from their lines at Kingsbridge towards our old encampment at the Plains, stripping the inhabitants not only of their provisions and forage, but even the clothes on their backs, and without discrimination.

The information, my dear Marquis, which I begged the favor of you to obtain, was not, I am persuaded, to be had through the channel of the officers of the French fleet, but by application to your fair lady, to whom I should be happy in an opportunity of paying my homage in Virginia, when the war is ended, if she could be prevailed upon to quit, for a few months, the gayeties and splendor of a court, for the rural amusements of an humble cottage.[2]

[1] After the evacuation of Rhode Island, General Sullivan retired with a part of the army to his former encampment at Providence. Lafayette was left with the remainder of the troops at Bristol, near the enemy's lines, with orders to watch their motions. This was an exposed situation on the neck of land between the bay and a river. He was afterwards removed farther up the country, behind the town of Warren. General Greene had left the army and gone to Boston, with the view of facilitating, in his capacity of quartermaster-general, the supply of Count d'Estaing's fleet.—*Sparks.*

[2] Several ladies had lately come out from New York, who reported that a vessel had been captured and brought to that city, in which was contained a present from the Queen of France to Mrs. Washington, as "an elegant testimo-

I shall not fail to inform Mrs. Washington of your polite attention to her. The gentlemen of my family are sensible of the honor you do them by your kind inquiries, and join with me in a tender of best regards; and none can offer them with more sincerity and affection than I do. With every sentiment you can wish, I am, my dear Marquis, etc.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, FISHKILL,
3 October, 1778.

SIR,

I am honored with your favour of the 27 of September, with the inclosed Resolves of Congress; a copy of which has been transmitted to Major-General Lincoln for his information and direction.

Being separated from my papers, I am uncertain whether I mentioned in my last, that, the enemy in the Jerseys having received a reinforcement and made some forward movements, I had thought it expedient to detach another brigade thither to act in conjunction with the one already there, together with Pulaski's corps and the militia, and had sent Major-General Lord Stirling to take the command of the whole; that I had also ordered Major-General Putnam across the river for the immediate security of

nial of her approbation of the General's conduct," and that it had been sold at auction for the benefit of the captors. This intelligence was so confidently affirmed, and from such a respectable source, that General Washington had requested the Marquis de Lafayette to make inquiry as to the truth of it, through the medium of the Marchioness at Versailles.

West Point, and moved a division of troops to this place, to be nearer that post. I have since come here myself, and propose to remain till the views of the enemy in the Jerseys are decided; though I have had no reason to alter my opinion, that nothing more than a forage is intended. By the last accounts they had drawn in their out-parties, and resumed their first bounds behind Hackinsac River, at the Liberty-Pole and Newbridge.

That part of Baylor's regiment, which escaped, came off in the first instance, and were afterwards brought off, in so dispersed a manner, that the number has not been ascertained; but, from what I have learned, I should estimate the loss at about fifty men and seventy horses. Major Clough is dead of his wounds. This affair seems to have been attended with every circumstance of cruelty.[1] It is a small compen-

[1] On the morning of the 27th of September Colonel Baylor marched with his regiment of dragoons from Paramus, and took up his quarters at Herringtown, a short distance from Tappan. Two roads led from the enemy's camp, one on each side of the Hackinsac River, which met at a bridge half a mile below Herringtown. At this bridge Colonel Baylor placed a guard of a sergeant and twelve men, with particular orders to keep a patrol of two men on each of these roads, who were to watch the roads to the distance of a mile from the guard; and be relieved every hour. These orders were strictly obeyed, but the enemy, being early informed of the exact position of the guard and of Baylor's detachment, by disaffected persons in the neighborhood, marched up during the night, on the west side of the Hackinsac River, till they came within half a mile of the patrol, and then sent a party through the fields at some distance from the road, and cut off the guard and the patrols without being discovered. They pushed forward and made a sudden attack upon Baylor's men, who were taken wholly by surprise.—*Baylor's MS. Letter*, October 19th.

The detachment was quartered for the night in barns, which the enemy forced with fixed bayonets, committing at the first assault indiscriminate slaughter, as far as the darkness would permit. The whole number of privates present was one hundred and four, of whom eleven were killed outright; seven-

sation for this accident that Colonel Butler three or four days ago, with a party of infantry and horse comprehending Major Lee's corps, surprised about an hundred Yagers below Tarrytown, killed ten on the spot, and took a lieutenant and eighteen men prisoners. The roughness of the country facilitated the flight of the rest, and prevented the success being more complete. The proceedings in the case of General St. Clair accompany this letter. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. I have received advices of the arrival of a Packet from England.[1]

teen were left behind wounded, four of whom afterwards died; and thirty-nine were taken prisoners, eight of whom were wounded. The rest made their escape. Colonel Baylor, Major Clough, a lieutenant, and the surgeon were wounded. A series of affidavits were taken by order of Congress from the men who escaped, in which the particulars of the affair were stated in detail. Several of these men were wounded in numerous places with bayonets. One of the soldiers, from whom an affidavit was taken, had received sixteen wounds; two others twelve each, another nine, and many of them from three to seven. They all testified, that the cry for quarter was not heeded by the assailants.—*Sparks.*

[1] Read Oct. 7th.

"I am well convinced myself, that the enemy, long ere this, are perfectly well satisfied, that the possession of our towns, while we have an army in the field, will avail them little. It involves *us* in difficulty, but does not by any means ensure *them* conquest. They well know, that it is our arms, not defenceless towns, which they have to subdue before they can arrive at the haven of their wishes; and that, till this end is accomplished, the superstructure they have been endeavoring to raise, 'like the baseless fabric of a vision,' falls to nothing. But this, though a reason operating powerfully with me in deciding upon the point, is by no means the most weighty consideration in my mind. A measure of this kind, before the hostile disposition of France became so evident, and before the French fleet arrived on the coast, was probable, as their whole conduct was full of unaccountables; but to attempt now to detach ten thousand men, (which is I suppose half of their army,) and to divide their naval strength for the protection of it, would in my judgment be an act of insanity, and expose one part or the other of both land and sea force to inevitable ruin. I therefore conclude, that they will go there wholly, or not at all. Nevertheless I may be mistaken."—*Washington to Henry Laurens*, 3 October, 1778.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

MY DEAR MARQUIS, FISHKILL, 4th Octr., 1778.

I have had the pleasure of receiving, by the hands of Monsieur de la Colombe, your favor of the 28th ulto. accompanied by one of the 24th, which he overtook somewhere on the Road. The leave requested in the former,[1] I am as much interested to grant, as to refuse my approbation of the Cartel proposed in the latter. The generous spirit of Chivalry, exploded by the rest of the world, finds a refuge, my dear friend, in the sensibility of your nation *only*. But it is in vain to cherish it, unless you can find antagonists to support it; and however well adapted it might have been to the times in which it existed, in our days it is to be feared, that your opponent, sheltering himself behind modern opinions, and under his present public character of Commissioner, would turn a virtue of such ancient date into ridicule. Besides, supposing his Lordship accepted your terms, experience has proved, that chance is often as much concerned in deciding these matters as bravery; and always more, than the justice of the cause. I would not therefore have your life by the remotest possibility exposed, when it may be reserved for so many greater occasions. His Excellency, the Admiral, I flatter myself, will be in sentimt. with me; and, as soon as he can spare you, send you to head-Quarters, where I anticipate the pleasure of seeing you.[2]

[1] Permission to return to General Washington's head-quarters, for the purpose of consulting him on certain points of intelligence which the Marquis had lately received from France.

[2] In an address to Congress by the British commissioners, after Governor Johnstone had retired from the commission (Congress having refused to hold any

Having wrote very fully to you a few days ago, and put the Letter under cover to Genl. Sullivan, I have nought to add at this time, but to assure you, that, with the most perfect regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

further intercourse with him), they expressed themselves in terms derogatory to France; not very wisely, it must be allowed, considering the relations that then existed between the French and American national councils. The address was signed by all the commissioners, but Lord Carlisle's name appeared at the head, as president of the board. The French officers thought that Lord Carlisle ought to be called to account for the free remarks, which he had sanctioned by his signature. This duty appertained to Lafayette, he being the highest amongst them in rank. It seemed to accord, also, with his own feelings, and in one of the letters, to which the above was an answer, he had asked General Washington's opinion. Neither the advice of Washington nor of Count d'Estaing could divert him from his purpose. A challenge was sent; but it was declined by Lord Carlisle, who said, in a civil and good-humored reply, that he considered himself responsible only to his country and King for his public conduct and language.

[1] "The coincidence between your Excelly's sentiments respecting the Marquis de Lafayette's cartel communicated in the letter with which you honored me the 20th, and those which I expressed to him on the same subject, is peculiarly flattering to me. I am happy to find, that my disapprobation of this measure was founded on the same arguments, which, in Your Excellency's hands, acquire new force and persuasion. I omitted neither serious reasoning nor pleasantry to divert him from a Scheme in which he could be so easily foiled, without having any credit given to him by his antagonist for his generosity and sensibility. He intimated, that your Excelly. did not discountenance it, and that he had pledged himself to the principal officers of the french Squadron to carry it into execution. The charms of vindicating the honor of his country were irresistible; but, besides, he had in a manner committed himself, and could not decently retract. I however continued to lay my friendly commands upon him to renounce his project; but I was well assured, that, if he determined to persevere in it, neither authority nor vigilance would be of any avail to prevent his message to Lord Carlisle. And tho' his ardor was an overmatch for my advice and influence, I console myself with the reflection, that his Lordship will not accept the challenge; and that while our friend gains all the applause, which is due to him for wishing to become the Champion of his Country, he will be secure from the possibility of such dangers as my fears wd. otherwise create for him, by those powerful barriers, which shelter his lordship, and which I am persuaded he will not in the present instance violate.

"The Report of Lord Carlisle's having proposed a substitute reached me, for the first time, in Your Excellency's letter. If this is really the case, his Lordship has availed himself of one of the ways in which he was at liberty to wave the M'quis's defiance, and has probably answered it in a strain of pleas-

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

FISHKILL, Oct. 4th, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

My public Letters to the President of Congress will inform you of the wind that wafted me to this place. Nothing more therefore need be said on that head. Your Letter of the 8th ulto. contains three questions and answers, to wit; Can the Enemy prosecute the war? Do they mean to stay on the Continent? And, is it our interest to put impediments in the way of their departure? To the first you answer in the negative. To the second you are decided in opinion, that they do not. And to the third say clearly, No.

Much, my good Sir, may be said in favor of these answers, and *some* things against the two first of them. By way therefore of dissertation on the first, I will also beg leave to put a question, and give it an answer. Can *we* carry on the war much longer? Certainly NO, unless some measures can be devised & speedily executed to restore the credit of our currency, restrain extortion, & punish forestallers. Without these can be effected, what funds can stand the present expenses of the army? And what officer can bear the weight of prices, that every necessary article is now got to? A Rat in the shape of a horse, is not to be bought at this time for less than £200; A Saddle under Thirty or Forty;—Boots twenty,—and

antry; for, the affair being wholly personal, his Lordship could not have made such a proposition seriously. Indeed I have every reason to think, that the matter has terminated as I expected; for the Mquis was still in Philadelphia, by my last accounts from thence."—*Washington to Count d'Estaing*, 24 October, 1778.

shoes and other articles in the like proportion.—How is it possible, therefore, for officers to stand this without an increase of pay? And how is it possible to advance their Pay, when Flour is selling (at different places) from five to fifteen pounds pr cwt.,—Hay from ten to thirty pounds pr Tunn, and Beef & other essentials in this proportion?

The true point of light, then, to place & consider this matter in is, not simply whether Gt. Britain can carry on the war, but whose Finances, (theirs or ours,) is most likely to fail; which leads me to doubt very much the infallibility of the answer given to your second question, respecting the Enemy's leaving the Continent; for I believe they will not do it, while ever *hope* and the chapter of *accidents* can give them a *chance* of bringing us to terms short of *Independence.*—But this, *you* will perhaps say, they are now bereft of. *I* shall acknowledge that many things favor the idea; but add, that, upon a comparative view of circumstances, there is abundant matter to puzzle & confound the judgment. To your third answer I subscribe with hand and heart. The opening is now fair, and God grant that they may embrace the opportunity of bidding an eternal adieu to our (once quit of them) happy Land. If the Spaniards would but join their Fleets to those of France, & commence hostilities, my doubts would all subside. Without it, I fear the British Navy has it too much in its power to counteract the Schemes of France.

The high prices of every necessary; The little, indeed no benefit, which officers have derived from the

intended bounty of Congress in the article of cloathing; The change in the establishment, by which so many of them are discontinued; The unfortunate delay of this business, which kept them too long in suspense, and set a number of evil spirits to work; The unsettled Rank, and contradictory modes of adjusting it,—with other causes, which might be enumerated have conspired to sour the temper of the army exceedingly; and has, I am told, been productive of a memorial or representation of some kind to Congress; which neither directly nor indirectly did I know or even hear was in agitation, till some days after it was despatched; owing, as I apprehend, to the secrecy with which it was conducted to keep it from my knowledge, as I had in a similar instance last spring discountenanced and stifled a child of the same illegitimacy in its birth. If you have any news worth communicating, do not put it under a bushel, but give it to, dear Sir, yours sincerely, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 6 October, 1778.

SIR,

This will be delivered to you by Major-General the Marquis de Lafayette. The generous motives, which first induced him to cross the Atlantic and enter the Army of the United States, are well known to Congress. Reasons equally laudable now engage his return to France, who in her present circum-

stances claims his services. His eagerness to offer his duty to his prince and Country, however great, could not influence him to quit the continent in any stage of an unfinished campaign. He resolved to remain at least till the close of the present, and embraces this moment of suspense to communicate his wishes to Congress, with a view of having the necessary arrangements made in time, and of being still within reach, should any occasion offer of distinguishing himself in the field.

The Marquis at the same time, from a desire of preserving a relation with us, and a hope of having it yet in his power to be useful as an American officer solicits only a furlough sufficient for the purposes above mentioned. A reluctance to part with an officer, who unites to all the military fire of youth an uncommon maturity of judgment, would lead me to prefer his being absent on this footing, if it depended on me. I shall always be happy to give such a testimony of his services, as his bravery and conduct on all occasions entitle him to; and I have no doubt, that Congress will add suitable expressions of their sense of his merit, and their regret on account of his departure. I have the honor, &c.

P. S. The Marquis is so obliging as to take charge of a Packet containing the Proceedings of a court-martial in General Schuyler's case.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, October 13th. Referred to G. Morris, R. H. Lee, Witherspoon, S. Adams, and Drayton.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

SIR, HEAD-QUARTERS, 7th October, 1778.

Your letter of yesterday reached me in the night. Your observations on the probable intentions of the enemy are forcible.[1] The capture or destruction of the French fleet appears to be the most important object, they can have on the continent; and it is very possible they may have it in contemplation, though the time they have lost, since they have had the superiority at sea, and the advanced season of the year, are strong arguments against it. Our present disposition was formed on the possibility of such an event, at the same time that it does not lose sight of the security of the North River, or the concentration of our force to repel any attempt upon the army. Though it may not be probable, that the enemy have at present any design against either of these, it would be imprudent to offer them a temptation by diminishing our strength in a considerable detachment, so far Eastward as to be out of supporting distance. If they were able to possess themselves of the Highland passes, and interrupt the navigation of the River, the consequences on the score of subsistence would be terrible, as well to the fleet as the army. It is supposed, the enemy have lost all hopes of effecting

[1] General Gates had written from Danbury, where he was stationed: "The French fleet and Boston must be the sole objects of the British arms upon this continent. The season of the year will indeed admit only of a sudden and rash attempt, which success alone will justify. Desperate enterprises do frequently succeed; witness that of 1759 against Quebec. Had Sir Henry Clinton meant to attack this army, he would not have given so much notice and lost so much time. The enemy may leave the continent; if they do not, the French fleet is the prize they mean to contend for."—*MS. Letter*, October 6th.

any thing material against these States, and this supposition is upheld by powerful reasons; but, after all, the truth of it depends so much upon the contingencies of naval operations and European politics, that it could not be wise to let it essentially influence our military arrangements.

I am taking measures for having all the roads leading towards Boston put in repair for the more convenient march of the several columns, in case a movement Eastward should become necessary. You will therefore be pleased to send a proper fatigue party on the lower route, leading from Danbury to Hartford, so that the column, which may march thence, may not interfere with the others, by falling into the same road, so long as it can be avoided. The column nearest to this will proceed by New Milford, Woodbury, and Waterbury, to Farmington. The repairs are only to be extended through the rough country. You will also send a Quarter-Master forward to observe the good halting-places at proper stages. His report you will communicate to me. I am, Sir, &c.[1]

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

FREDG., IN YE STATE OF N. YORK,
Oct. 10, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have now, at your request, given my full consent to the Sale of the Lands which I hold, in right of Dower, in a Tract in the County of York; to a Water

[1] The enemy in reality had no designs against the French fleet at Boston, though it is probable they kept up an appearance of such a purpose by way of

Grist mill thereon; To lotts in the City of Williamsburg, and others in Jamestown; as also to yr. Renting or otherwise disposing of ye other Dower Land and Slaves which I am possessed of in the County of King William, upon the terms which have been specifically agreed and subscribed to. But I should think myself wanting in that friendship and regard which I have ever professed for and endeavored to evince toward you, were I to withhold my advice from you with respect to the disposal of them.

A moment's reflection must convince you of two things; first, that Lands are of permanent value; that there is scarce a possibility of their falling in price, but almost a moral certainty of their rising exceedingly in value. And, secondly, that our Paper currency is fluctuating, that it has depreciated considerably, and that no human foresight can, with precision, tell how low it may get, as the rise, or fall of it depends upon contingencies which the utmost stretch of human sagacity can neither foresee nor prevent. These positions being granted and no one can gainsay the justice of them, it follows that, by parting from your Lands, you give a certainty for an uncertainty, because it is not the nominal Price—It is not ten, fifteen or twenty pounds an acre—but the relative value of this sum to specie, or something of

feint. Sir Henry Clinton wrote to Lord George Germaine at this time, informing him that the convoy was ready, and five thousand troops would shortly be despatched to the West Indies, and three thousand more to Florida. "With an army so much diminished at New York," he added, "nothing important can be done; especially as it is also weakened by sending seven hundred men to Halifax, and three hundred to Bermuda."—*MS. Letter*, October 8th.

substantial worth, that is to constitute a good price. The inference, therefore, I mean to draw, and the advice I shall give in consequence of it, is this, that you do not convert the Lands you now hold into Cash faster than your present contract with the Alexanders, and a certain prospect of again vesting it in other lands more convenient, requires of you. This will be treading upon sure ground. It will enable you to discharge contracts already entered into, and, in effect, exchange Land for Land; for it is a matter of moonshine to you, considered in that point of view, how much the money depreciates, if you can discharge one pound with another pound, and get Land of equal value to that you sell. But far different from this is the case of those who sell for Cash and keep that Cash by them, put it to interest, or receive it in annual payments; for, in either of these cases, if our currency should unfortunately continue to depreciate in the manner it has done, in the course of the last two years, a pound may not, in the space of two years more, be worth a shilling, the difference of which becomes a clear loss to the possessor and evinces, in a clear point of view the force and efficacy of my advice to you to pay debts, and vest it in something that will retain its primitive value; or rather, in your case, not to part with that thing for money, unless it be with a view to the Investing it in something of equal value; and it accounts at the same time, for the principal upon which I act with respect to my own Interest in the Dower Lands; for I should be wanting to myself, and guilty of an inexcusable

act of remission and crimin'l injustice to your mother not to secure an equivalent for her releasement of Dower; and this might be the case of a nominal sum that had no relative value to the thing in question, and which, eventually might be a means of giving away the Estate; for it is not the number of Pounds, but the worth, and what they will fetch, that is to stamp the value of them. Four hundred Pounds in Paper Dollars now is, and I suppose, at the time of parting with this dower, may be worth one hundred pounds in specie; but, two years hence, one hundred pounds in specie, may be worth, and will fetch, one thousand pounds of paper. It can not be reasonable or just, therefore, to expect that I, or your mother (if she should be the survivor) should lose this, when no person, I believe, will undertake to give it as an opinion that the value of the Dower will decrease, but the direct contrary, as lands are increasing in their price every day. This, if you follow the advice here given, can not be the case with you, let money depreciate as it will, because with a pound you pay a pound in discharge of a purchase already made, and for those to be made you can regulate your sales by your purchases.

It may be said that our money will recover a proper tone again, and in that case it would be an advantage to turn Lands, &c., into cash for the benefit of the rise. In answer to this, I shall only observe that this is a lottery; that it may or may not, happen; that, if it should happen, you have lost nothing; if it should not, you have saved your Estate, which in

the other case, might have been sunk. Hence it appears that you may play a good and sure game, so far as it relates to yourself, and, so far as it respects me, the advantage is wholly on your side; for instance, if the difference between specie and paper at this time is as four to one, and next year is eight to one, it makes no difference to you, because the presumption is that same Tobo., corn, and other produce, will rise in proportion to the fall of money, and fetch in quantity what it lacks in quality. But, on the other hand, if the Exch. was to be fixed at the present difference of four to one, and should hereafter become as one to one, that is equal, I should get four times as much as I am content to receive, and you would lose it; from hence, as before, you may gain and can not lose, while I get the simple value of the Estate, and can neither gain or lose, which is all I aim at by fixing the value of the dower in specie, to be discharged in any money currt. in the Country at the time of payment, at the prevailing Exchange or difference between specie and paper.

It may possibly be said that this is setting up a distinction between Specie and Paper, and will contribute to its depreciation. I ask if there is a man in the United States that does not make a distinction when four to one is the difference, and whether it is in the power of an individual to check this when Congress, and the several assemblies, are found unequal to the task? Not to require, or contract for, the actual payment in Specie, but to keep this as much out of sight as possible, in common cases that

are to have an immediate operation, is all that can be expected; but in a bargain that may exist for twenty years, there should be something to insure mutual advantage, which advantage, though every man can judge of in the transactions of a day, no man can do it when it is to be extended to years, under the present fluctuating state of our Paper Bills of Credit.

My design in being thus particular with you, is to answer two purposes: first, to show my ideas of the impropriety of parting with your own Lands faster than you can vest the money in other lands (comprehending those already purchased); and secondly, to evince to you the propriety of my own conduct in securing to myself and your mother the intrinsic value, neither more nor less, of the Dower Estate.

I have only one piece of advice more to give, and that is, to aim rather at the Exchange than Sale of your Lands; and I think, among those Gentn. mentioned in a former letter, you may find chapmen.

I am with very sincere regard, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL ANDREW LEWIS, VIRGINIA.

FREDERICKSBURG, IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK,
Octr. 15th, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 8th of Augt. came safe to my hands, tho' delayed in the conveyance. I am very glad that the Board prevailed upon you to act as a Commissioner at Fort Pitt, tho' I am apprehensive the end designed, so far as an Indian treaty was in view, will not be answered by it; and am sorry that

you met with so many disappointments in the beginning, on acct. of the non-attendance of the gent. in behalf of Pensylvania.

No man can be more thoroughly impressed with the necessity of offensive operations against Indians, in every kind of rupture with them, than I am; nor can any man feel more sensibly for General McIntosh, than I do, on two accts., the Public and his own. But ours is a kind of struggle designed, I dare say, by Providence to try the patience, fortitude, and virtue of men. None, therefore, who is engaged in it, will suffer himself, I trust, to sink under difficulties, or be discouraged by hardships. General McIntosh is only experiencing upon a small Scale, what I have had an ample share of, upon a large one; and must, as I have been obliged to do in a variety of Instances, yield to necessity; that is, to use a vulgar phraze, "shape his coat according to his cloth," or, in other words, if he cannot do as he wishes, he must do what he can.

If the Enemy mean to hold their present Posts in the United States, the presumption is, that their operations next Campaign will be vigorous and decisive; because feeble efforts can be of no avail, unless, by a want of virtue, we ruin and defeat ourselves, which I think is infinitely more to be dreaded, than the whole force of G. Britain, assisted as they are [by] Hessian, Indian, and Negro allies; for certain I am, that, unless Extortion, forestalling, and other practices, which have crept in and become exceedingly prevalent and injurious to the common cause, can meet

with proper checks, we must inevitably sink under such a load of accumulated oppression. To make and extort money in every shape that can be devised, and at the same time to decry its value, seems to have become a mere business and an epidemical disease, calling for the interposition of every good man and body of men.

We have for more than a month been kept in an awkward state of suspense, on acct. of the Enemy's preparations for embarking at New York. Many circumstances indicate a total evacuation of that City and its dependencies; others tend more to prove that it is only a partial one. Some time ago I inclined to the former opinion; at present I lean more to the latter. Certain it is they are about to detach Troops, and I believe to the West Indies; but the weight of evidence, in my judgment, is on the side of their garrisoning New York and Rhode Island, this winter at least. In this case, it would appear clear to you, if you knew the circumstances of the army, that no aid, or very trifling, can go from hence to Genl. McIntosh; but I should think that the Frontiers of Virginia, Maryland, and Pensylvania could furnish men fully competent to an Expedition to Detroit, and of such kind as the Service requires. Two very common errors should be avoided in getting them, if militia; namely, not to draw the men together till every thing else is prepared; and, next, not to engage them for too short a time. For Militia are soon tired of waiting, and will return at the expiration of their term of service, if they were upon

the eve certainly of reaping the most important advantages.

Before I conclude, let me ask if we have any prospect of getting Lands, which have been Surveyed & located under the proclamation of 1763, but which might not have been patented? This is the case with some that I had in my own right and by purchase. Having had no liezure, even in thought, to attend to the matter for near four years, it would be rather hard upon me therefore under the circumstances to be a loser, or put to difficulty to get my right. Was I not concerned with you in the Burning Spring? Is the land Patented & secured?

If Congress are not convinced of the impropriety of a certain irregular promotion, they are the only sett of Men who require further and greater proofs, than have already been given, of the fallibility of the measure.[1]

With sincere regard and esteem, I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

HEAD-QUARTERS, FREDERICKSBURG,
22 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you yesterday enclosing the Resolve of Congress for the removal of the troops of the Convention to Virginia. I find, upon perusing the Resolve more attentively, that Sir Henry Clinton had, & by the Resolve of the 11 of Septr., recited in that of

[1] Alluding to the appointment of major-generals on the 19th of February, 1777, in which Arnold and Lewis were superseded. See above, vol. v., 270. General Lewis resigned his commission in consequence of that measure.

the 15 Inst.—the choice of either granting passports to transport Flour by Water, or to supply the troops himself by the 5th Inst. If neither has been complied with, then the removal is to take place. The first request we know has never been granted, and I imagine no steps have been taken to supply the troops from New York or else where. If there have agreeable to the Letter and Spirit of the Resolution they are to remain where they now are. If not, they are to be sent forward in the manner pointed out in mine of yesterday.[1]

I have certain advices that the fleet left Sandy Hook the 19th and 20th. The first division consisted of upwards of one hundred and twenty sail, of which fifteen were of the line and ten or twelve frigates. The second division about thirty sail, of which two were of fifty guns, and two frigates. They stood Eastward. Whether the remaining Ships and troops are to remain at New York, I have not yet been able to ascertain.

[1] "As Sir Henry Clinton never complied with the request of granting passports for the transportation of Flour by Water, it becomes necessary that the Convention Troops should without loss of time be put in motion for Charlottesville in Virginia, agreeable to the order of Congress. You will be pleased to signify this to General Phillips immediately upon Receipt. I know of no way of conveying the troops to the place of their destination, but by calling upon the several States thro' which they are to pass for a proper guard of militia, and Carriages sufficient to transport their baggage. You will therefore apply to the State of Massachusetts for the number necessary; and, when you have fixed the time of march and the Route, inform Govr. Trumbull, that he may be ready to receive them upon the Borders of Connecticut. I shall give him previous notice, that he may be prepared for such an event. Be pleased to inform me likewise, when the troops leave their present quarters, that I may make application to the Governors of New York and New Jersey, &c., for an Escort." —*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 21 October, 1778.

I think it would be prudent, under the present appearances, for you to call for five thousand militia, including those already in service. Although I am myself persuaded, that the late embarkation is not intended against Boston, I would not, for the sake of opinion, put any thing to the Risque. That force, with the Count's own strength and General Sullivan's, will prevent the Enemy, should they be bound thither, from doing any thing decisive before the troops upon their march can get up. It is more than probable, that the British fleet of men of war will appear off Boston, to keep the Count in check, altho' the destination of the transports may be to any other port. I do not think it will be needful to call for this addition to the militia in their regular course of service, or for any certain time. Those from the vicinity of Boston had better come out for a few days, as in that time the views of the enemy will be known. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

CAMP, NEAR FREDERICKSBURG,
22 October, 1778.

SIR,

* * * * * *

With respect to seditious papers, calculated to excite dissensions and mislead the people, Congress may be assured, that whenever they may be sent from the enemy by a flag, and they come to my hands, I shall not fail to suppress them. I fear, however, the avenues and channels in which they may be conveyed are so various and so numerous, that no

exertions will be found sufficient entirely to prevent the evil.[1]

Having mentioned the subject of seditious papers, I beg leave to observe, that the commissioners in their late proclamation and manifesto have touched upon every thing to awaken the fears of the people. They have thrown out an implied threat to change the manner of the war to one of a more predatory and destructive kind. They may have done this only *in terrorem;* but it is possible that it may be intended as a serious principle of practice. It perhaps may not be improvident to guard against it, by fortifying our most valuable and most accessible seaports. Immediately after the action at Monmouth, I sent General Duportail to form a plan of fortification for the Delaware. While he was in the execution of this

[1] When the first news of Lord North's conciliatory bills reached Congress, they resolved, that any man or body of men who should presume to make a separate or partial convention with the commissioners ought to be considered and treated as enemies of the United States. Intelligence had recently been received, that the commissioners "were about to send out, under the sanction of a flag, certain seditious papers, under the name and title of manifestos, to be distributed throughout the United States, with a view to stir up dissensions, animosities, and rebellion among the people." Persons engaged in distributing papers of this sort, were declared not to be entitled to the protection of a flag; and it was recommended to the executive powers of the several States to take up and secure such persons in close custody, and that the papers should be printed in the public gazettes.—*Journals*, October 16th. The offensive manifesto is contained in the *Remembrancer*, vol. vii., p. 127. Copies were folded in separate parcels, and sent to the President of Congress, to a member in Congress from each of the States, to the governors of the States, military commanders, speakers of assemblies, ministers of the gospel, and judges. It is not likely, that many of the parcels reached their destination. General Sullivan received from the commanding officer at Newport a box of these papers, which he delivered over to the Assembly of Rhode Island. The flag ship, containing the copies for Congress and Pennsylvania, was cast away, and duplicates were forwarded with a letter from Dr. Ferguson.—*Sparks.*

task, he was called away at General Lee's instance as a witness in his trial. After this was over, I thought it was necessary that he should turn his attention to the Highland posts; and lately the possibility of an enterprise against the French fleet and the town of Boston determined me to send him to that place, to take measures for their common security. Previous to this, however, he had sent Colonel Laumoy to prepare the way, by taking plans of the river and the adjacent country near Philadelphia. These points I deemed it material to mention; and I submit to Congress the propriety, as Colonel Laumoy is not yet returned, of their directing a number of men to prosecute the defences. * * *

October 23d. I have the honor to transmit a copy of Lieutenant-Colonel Butler's journal, which I just now received from General Stark. Congress will perceive by this, that he has effectually destroyed the settlements of Anaquaga and Unadilla, and returned with the troops under his command to Schoharie. I hope their destruction will give some relief to the frontier inhabitants of this and the States of Jersey and Pennsylvania, at least for this year, as they were places of rendezvous for the savages and Tories, who infested them, and where they deposited a part of their plunder. * * *

I have the honor, &c.[1]

[1] Colonel Butler's Journal was printed by order of Congress. See *Remembrancer*, vol. vii., p. 253. An enterprise into the Indian country, near the sources of the Susquehanna, had been resuscitated on an extended scale. The successes of Colonel Butler in destroying some of the principal Indian towns, and the lateness of the season, caused the project to be deferred. The particulars may be seen in Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. iii., p. 562.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, FREDERICKSBURG,
24 October, 1778.

SIR,

The letter, which I had the honor of addressing to you the day before yesterday, would inform Congress of the embarkation and sailing of a considerable detachment of the enemy from New York, and of the measures I had taken, in expectation of—and upon the happening of the event. Whether this will be succeeded by a further embarkation, or by a total evacuation of the posts, which they hold within the States, in the course of this year or the ensuing one, I cannot pretend to determine.[1] But as it will be right and prudent in us to prepare for every contingency, I would, with the greatest deference, submit it to Congress, whether it may not be proper for them to call upon the States to provide Men in time for filling their respective Battalions before, or at any rate against, the opening of the Spring, and in the same manner, as if there was a moral certainty that the War would be prosecuted with all possible vigor on the part of Britain. Should this not be the case, or should any

[1] "I have just received intelligence from two different quarters, that the fleet, which sailed on the 19th and 20th instants from the Hook, contained only the invalids of the army bound for Europe, the officers of the reduced Regiments, and the families of several public and private Gentlemen. Perhaps all outward bound Vessels might have taken the benefit of Convoy, which may have enlarged the fleet to an uncommon size. My accounts still confirm a very considerable body of troops being embarked, but that they yet remain in the Bay of New York. Hence arose the mistake. My intelligences were not before sufficiently accurate, and I was naturally led to believe, that the fleet which left the Hook on the 19th and 20th had the troops on board. You shall be advised of the sailing of this second fleet."—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 25 October, 1778.

events cast up in the mean time to render Troops unnecessary, it will be easy to disband the levies and to keep them from the field—which on the other hand, our relaxations in not providing them, may subject us, at least, to many disagreeable consequences.

The general Return of the Infantry in the Month of September, transmitted to the Board of War by the Adjutant General and to which I beg leave to refer, will shew Congress the whole amount of our reputed force at that time, but I am to observe, that large, very large, deductions are to be made from it, on account of the Columns of sick and the men said to be on command. Many under the former description, particularly that of sick absent, are actually dead—others unfit for service, and several, who have recovered, have deserted: nor will the latter afford more than one half of its number in time of Action, as various duties such as waggoning, distant Guards, Escorts, &c. employ a great proportion of those under this denomination.

Besides the above deductions, Congress will perceive from the Return which I now take the liberty of transmitting that there are 4380 Drafts and others whose terms of service will expire during and by the close of Winter. For I am sorry to add that our exertions to re-engage the Drafts and old Soldiers, in this predicament for the usual Bounty have proved so far ineffectual and without success. I have not tried what effect the additional Grant of ten dollars might have; but I fear, and it seems to be the opinion of all I have consulted upon the occasion that it

would have but little if any influence. I know in the case of the Drafts and troops of our State, that the offer of twenty dollars on the part of the Continent with a like allowance and an actual deposit of it by the State has been no temptation.

This general reluctance and refusal is founded in the unhappy depreciated light in which the Soldiery view the money, and their expectation of receiving immense State, District and Substitute Bounties—Whether grants or bounties by Congress, bearing some proportion to them, to such as should enlist for the War would be attended with better success. I cannot undertake to decide. The experiment may be made, if they judge it proper, and if it proves an inducement to any extent, it will be an infinite saving in the end. I believe, however, our surest and only certain aids will be derived from drafting.—Which I trust may and will be done by the States on the recommendation of Congress, agreeable to the mode mentioned in my letter to their Committee, when they first honored me with a visit at Valley Forge. The exertions to recruit by voluntary inlistments may still go on, as both modes in all probability will not produce near as many men as may be found necessary.

In the case of the Carolina Troops, whose service is ending every day, the Officers say—that nothing will induce them to inlist, unless they can be permitted to go home on furlough till the Spring. On this indulgence they seem to think, several might be engaged. The distance is great, and there will be

some uncertainty as to their returning, besides it will be fixing a precedent for others. If Congress approve the plan, they will be pleased to inform me by the earliest opportunity.

I am under some difficulty about cloathing the drafts and the old Soldiers whose service is expiring and will determine every day. As Congress have never expressed their sense upon the subject, and this is increased by a letter which I received some time ago from the Board of War, which respects particularly the drafts; I must earnestly request that Congress will favor me with the speediest directions in the case. Whether they are to be furnished out of the supplies coming on, equally with the other troops. At the same time I will take the liberty to offer it as my opinion, that however inconvenient or expensive it may appear at the first view to cloath them, the measure will be necessary, and founded not only in humanity but sound policy. We have no prospect now of levying men in any other way, and if they are not cloathed, they will be exhausted by sickness and death, and not doing it may prove an insurmountable Bar—or at least a great obstacle to our obtaining future aids—tho' the Exigencies of our Affairs should be never so pressing. Yet the Cloaths may be withheld as long as circumstances will permit, as an inducement for then to inlist. In the instance of the old Soldiers, who have not received the annual allowance of Congress, the point seems clearly in their favor. The Board suggested, that the drafts might be supplied out of the best of the old Cloaths,

which might be given in by the troops on receiving new ones; but unfortunately there will be few of any worth. I have, &c.

TO MR. JAMES HILL.

FREDERICKSBURG, IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK,
27 October, 1778.

MR. HILL,

Your Letter of the 5th of Septr. came to my hands a Post or two ago.—I thank you for your offer to look after the Plantation I held in King William, but having rented it to Mr. Custis I have no longer occasion for the superintendance of a Manager, there or elsewhere, in the lower part of Virginia, and have to request that all the money you now possess or may hereafter receive of mine before you quit Mr. Custis's business, may be sent to Mr. Lund Washington by him or some other safe hand.—And before you remove from your present employment I must further beg that you will furnish me with an exact acct. of every thing sold from and purchased for my Estate under your care.—In short the exact state of all expenditures, and sales for my use, since the last account, which I settled with you myself—and, as Letters are subject to miscarriage, I shall be obliged to you to leave a copy thereof, with a list of Ballances due me (if any there should be) with Mr. Custis, that I may, in case of accidents, be provided with another copy from him.—When I speak of a list of Ballances, I hope and trust, there will be few or none—first from your care in

making your collections, and next from the plenty of money, which leaves every person without even the shadow of excuse to withhold payment of Debts at this time.—But if the case should be otherwise, a list of those Debts properly settled, and reduced to specialties (to avoid disputes in the collection by a new hand, unacquainted with the transaction, and unable to account for things which would not be disputed with you), left with Mr. Custis, will enable him or some other Person in my behalf to receive payment of the money with such Interest as may be due on the Bonds or Bills.

I have no doubt of your care and attention in this business—I have ever viewed you in the light of an honest man, and doubt not but that your last transactions with me will confirm me in this opinion yet, I cannot help observg. that from what I have been able to learn, I have derived very little profit from that part of my Estate which has been under your care for the three or four last years, but as I am not Inclined to go into an investigation of the matter at present, I would rather attribute it to bad seasons and other causes, than to the want of your good will.—

I observe what you say respecting your wages for looking after Mr. Custis's Estate; if my memory does not fail me the first agreement I made with you was reduced to writing, and the conditions specifically defined—After this, and some little time before I left Virginia, you complained that your pay was too small, and either required an augmentation or some Indulgences as an equivalent.

In answer, to the best of my recollection, I told you that as your trouble was like to be increased by the late purchases of Mr. Black, that I should not object to some further reasonable allowance, provided it should appear that your conduct, the good order of the Plantations, and crops would justifie me in so doing.—How far these conditions have been complied with on your part, is impossible for me at this distance and undr. my circumstances to determine, but as to your claim of merit, and an allowance for the Butter sold, because Mr. Valentine applied the greatest part, or all of what was made on the Estate to his own private emolument it is quite new and novel.

If the case was so, which I do not believe and think his accounts will show the contrary, it does not follow that because one man cheated that another is to be paid to the amount of the fraud for being honest.—The same reasoning will apply to Corn—Tobacco—and other articles.

I am very sure that if Valentine had such a privilege it was self granted; and that, was he now living, he might be brought to a severe account for the misapplication of the money. I am also clear that he never had an oz. of sugar or gill of rum in the world found him by agreement.—These articles were laid in for the use of sick Negroes, and if he made use of it for his own purposes, the greater villain he must be.

You further remark that *you think* your wages should *rise* in proportion to the depreciation of the money. Permit me to ask whether you have sold the produce of the Estate in proportion to the deprecia-

tion? and whether the expenses have not kept pace thereto? and lastly, whether during these times of common distress, you are not living at the cost of another Man? while you are raising and saving from your own Estate. These are matters not unworthy of consideration altho' I do not mean by propounding these questions that it should be infer'd that your wages ought not to be raised from the original agreement agreeable to the spirit and meaning of my assurances to you.—It was my intention (under the conditions before mentioned) that they should; and if Mr. Custis and you cannot agree on the quantum, I know of no mode so just and equitable as leaving the matter to impartial men to determine who can have no Interest in the decision; for it is impossible for me at this distance, and perplexed as I am with other business, to go into such enquiries as are necessary to enable me to form a proper judgment, and without this I might do an injury to one side or the other, to neither of which am I at all disposed.

I am, &c.

P. S. I have understood that till Mrs. Washington was at my Plantation at Clairborne's in August and directed or rather advised the Beeves and Corn to be sold, that no steps were taken to do it, in short that you were very seldom at or gave yourself much trouble about the Plantation. Mr. Custis will I expect, take every thing that is now on it at an appraised value—Corn as well as other things, which will ease you of every kind of trouble of that sort. The To-

bacco I trust will be prized and Inspected without a moment's loss of time and the notes put into Colo. Bassett's hands (after Davenport has recd. his share), to be sold for my use.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING.

27th October, 1778.

SIR,

I have read your Excellency's two favors of the 18th and 21st instant, with all the pleasure, which the perusal of your letters never fails to inspire, and which naturally attends the communications of those in whom we are interested. I rejoice with you in the prospect of your being so soon in a state to resume the sea. I cannot but ardently desire, that an opportunity may be soon offered you of again exerting that spirit of well-directed activity and enterprise, of which you have already given proofs so formidable to our enemies, and so beneficial to the common cause.

It is to be hoped our next accounts from Europe will manifest, that the court of Spain has properly estimated the value of the present moment, and has united her power to that of France, to give a decisive blow to the haughty dominion, which Britain has so long affected to maintain over the sea. The satisfaction I feel, in looking forward to this event, is augmented by anticipating the illustrious part I am persuaded you will act in accomplishing it. My letter of the 24th will, I hope, have removed Your Excellency's apprehensions for our amiable young friend. Every day's continuance where he now is, is an ad-

ditional confirmation of my conjecture on the manner in which his proposal has been received. It was natural that your sensibility should be affected as it was. A generous solicitude for the safety of a friend, so far from requiring an apology, is entitled to applause.

The British commissioners, I believe, will not trouble us with any more of their harangues. They authorize us to consider the last as a farewell speech, preparatory to their final exit. They will not need our aid to accelerate their political death. Whether they may not undergo a transmigration, of the sort Your Excellency mentions, time will discover. More unlikely things than this sometimes happen. The enemy's affairs in New York remain without any perceptible alterations from the state in which they were when I had the honor of writing you last. Their troops, which have embarked, still lie in the harbor. I have, &c.

TO BURWELL BASSETT.

FREDERICKSBURG, IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK,
30 October, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

By Mr. Custis I took the liberty of requesting the favor of you to set a value upon the Stock of every kind belonging to me at Claiborne's except the Horses and Plantation Utensils, which I gave him— I have since wrote to him (of this date) proposing that he should take all the Corn, Wheat, and Provender for the Cattle, so soon as it can be ascertained, at such prices as you shall affix; and if he agrees to it, I shall be much obliged to you for conferring this

additional favor on me.—It will be better for both of us that there should be but one Interest on the Plantation ; and that the property thereon should not be seperated which necessarily would be the case if he was to stock it for the use of the Negroes and Cattle, while the grain and provender raised thereon remained mine, and kept distinct from his, waiting for occasional markets. The latter I expect Mrs. Washington will require for her own use ; and I hope and trust, that the Tobacco will be stripped, prized, and Inspected with all dispatch possible, after which, and paying Davenport his share, I have directed Mr. Hill to put the rest into your hands, and shall be obliged to you for selling it for me in the same manner and at the same time you do your own.

I shall make no appology, My dear Sir, for giving you this trouble, especially as Mrs. Washington in a late Letter informed me that you have been so obliging as to assure her, that you would readily render me any services of this kind in your power, which indeed I had no doubt of before, or I should not have asked assistance of you.

I have understood that some choice Bull calves of the English kind were selected at Claiborne's, to breed from.—I beg you to accept one of the best as a present from me. These being descended from Mr. Custis's English Bull are much more valuable than common Calves of the same age, inasmuch as they will improve the breed.

We still remain in a disagreeable state of suspense respecting the Enemy's determinations—there are

reasons for and against a total evacuation of New York. I ought rather to have said there are circumstances and evidence for and against it ;—for reason will allow no alternative, so clearly does it point out the propriety of relinquishing their Ideal projects of bringing the United States to their terms.—A few days must I think unfold their views as they have been & now are busily Imployed in imbarking Troops, stores, &ca. most of which have fallen down to Sandy hook.—The West Indies is the supposed place of destination for this armament.—My compliments to all enquiring friends. I am, &c.

TO COUNT D'ESTAING,

HEAD QRS., FREDERICKSBURGH, 31st October, 1778.

SIR,

I have had the happiness of receiving your Excellency's letters of the 23 and 26th.—I thank you for the extract of Mr. Boubie's letter, which Yr. Excellency so obligingly communicates. His particular enumeration of the vessels of war which sailed with the fleet he mentions, corresponds with the advices I have received; but you will have been informed before this, that the supposed sailing of a body of troops in that fleet was a mistake of the same nature into which my observers fell. It was however the most natural one, that can be imagined, and such as might impose itself on the most careful circumspection.—I have the honor to inclose copies of four letters which contain the most recent and authentic information I have collected.

I shall not be surprised if, in a little time, Admiral Byron should make a demonstration before the harbor of Boston, deriving confidence from the superiority of his force. His apprehensions of your Excellency's activity may suggest this measure, to cover the movements which the enemy are making off the coast.

Your Excellency's sentiments give value to my own, on the utility of some well combined system of fortification for the security of our principal seaport towns. The predatory war, which the enemy threaten, and have actually carried on, in several instances, and which they no doubt have the disposition, when they have the opportunity, to repeat, give additional force to the other reasons for a measure of that nature.

I impatiently expect the arrival of Mr. Holker, to confer with him on the important objects with which he will be charged. I shall cautiously observe the secrecy you desire. Col. Hamilton's high respect for your Excellency cannot permit him to be insensible to so flattering a mark of your confidence and friendship, as the exception in his favor affords.[1] I received a letter yesterday from the Marquis. He gives me to hope the pleasure of seeing him to-morrow. He also intimates, that Lord Carlisle has not

[1] Mr. Holker was agent for the French marine in America, and consul from France to the United States. Count d'Estaing wrote, that Mr. Holker would make an interesting communication in his name. "I entreat you," said he, "not to confide the secret to any person, except Colonel Hamilton. His talents and his personal qualities have secured to him for ever my esteem, my confidence, and my friendship." Count d'Estaing had likewise made known the affair, whatever it was, to the Marquis de Lafayette.

only declined his proposition for the present, but, by a prudent foresight, has provided against the necessity of reviving the question at any future period. With the warmest esteem and most respectful attachment, I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 11 November, 1778.

SIR,

On Wednesday afternoon I received a letter from the Honble. Mr. Lee and Mr. Lovell, of the committee for foreign affairs, inclosing a plan and sundry resolutions of Congress for attacking Canada the next campaign, in conjunction with the forces of his most Christian Majesty; and requesting my observa-

[1] "The Enemy have imbarked a considerable part of their Troops at New York and the transports have fallen down to the hook.—the Imbarkation still continues; but there is no evidence, so conclusive, as to lead to a demonstration that they mean a total evacuation—the proofs are equivocal and will apply to a general or partial one.—a short time, perhaps by the end of our days of Grace (the 11th Inst.), matters may be reduced to a certainty.—I have little doubt in my own mind, but that the greatest part of the Troops Imbark'd and Imbarking at New York, are destined for the West Indies and their Posts.—Boston and Charles Town are also talked of but with no other view, I conceive than to perplex and confound the judgment; and yet, so far as any collateral enterprizes (in pursuance of their Predatory and Nefarious plan) can be undertaken subservient to and correspondent with their more enlarged and important views, I have little doubt of their attempting them. For if motives of policy do not restrain sure I am that those of generosity & humanity will not prevent them from committing as much devastation as they can upon our defenseless towns—Country seats and helpless women and Children.—Resentment and unsoldierly practices in them now seem to have taken place of all the manly virtues; as I wish self interest in the shape of forestalling, engrossing &ca. may not do among us, if not checked in time by well applied & vigorous Laws in the several States.—*Washington to Governor Henry*, 3 November, 1778.

tions upon the same, to be transmitted to Congress, and a copy to be delivered to the Marquis de la Fayette. These despatches, thro' the indisposition of the Marquis, who unfortunately was seized with a fever in his journey from Philadelphia, which still detains him at Fishkill, were prevented coming to hand till that time, and the great importance and extent of the subject they comprehend, would not permit me the honor of an earlier communication of my sentiments.

I hope Congress will excuse my not complying with that part of the Resolution, which requires me to deliver a copy of my observations to the Marquis, as the manner in which I am obliged to treat the subject, opens such a prospect of our wants and our weaknesses, as in point of policy ought only to be known to ourselves.

I am always happy to concur in sentiment with Congress, and I view the emancipation of Canada, as an object very interesting to the future prosperity and tranquility of these States; but I am sorry to say, the plan proposed for the purpose does not appear to me to be eligible under our present circumstances. I consider it as my duty, and what Congress will expect from me, to give my reasons for this opinion, with that frankness and candor, which the importance of the subject demands; and in doing this, I am persuaded I shall not fail to meet with their approbation.

It seems to me impolitic to enter into engagements with the Court of France for carrying on a combined

operation of any kind, without a moral certainty of being able to fulfil our part, particularly if the first proposal came from us. If we should not be able to perform them, it would argue either a want of consideration, a defective knowledge of our resources, or something worse than either; which could not fail to produce a degree of distrust and discontent, that might be very injurious to the Union. In the present instance should the scheme proposed be adopted, a failure on our part would certainly occasion in them a misapplication of a considerable land and naval force, which might be usefully employed elsewhere; and probably their total loss. It is true, if we were at this time to enter into the engagement, we shall be every day better able to judge, whether it will be in our power to accomplish what would be expected from us; and if we should find hereafter, that our resources will be unequal to the undertaking, we may give notice to the Court of France in season, to prevent the sailing of the troops, and the ill effects which might attend it. But, besides that a project of this kind could not be embraced by France, without its having an influence on the whole system of operations for the next campaign, which of course would receive some derangement from its being abandoned. A renunciation of this could not fail to give a very unfavorable impression of our foresight and providence, and would serve to weaken the confidence of that Court in our public councils.

So far from there being a moral certainty of our complying with our engagements, it may in my opin-

ion, be very safely pronounced, that if the enemy keep possession of their present posts at New York and Rhode Island, it will be impracticable either to furnish the men, or the other necessary supplies for prosecuting the plan. They will not attempt to keep those posts with less than ten thousand men and a considerable navy. If it should be thought best, for the advantage of carrying on the expeditions intended, to forego any offensive operations against these garrisons, and to leave them in quiet possession of such important places, we shall at least be obliged to provide for the security of the country against their incursions and depredations, by keeping up a force sufficient to confine them within their own limits. It is natural, too, to suppose, that the people's expectations of being protected will flow stronger in proportion to the diminution of the enemy's force, and the greater facility with which it can be afforded. They will hardly be content to continue in a state of alarm and insecurity from a force so inconsiderable, while the principal strength of the States is drawn out in the prosecution of remote objects. If this reasoning is just, we shall be obliged to have a larger force than the enemy, posted in different places, to prevent sudden inroads, which they would otherwise be able to make at different points; and the number required cannot be estimated at less than 12 or 15,000 men. This will be two thirds as large a force, as we have been able to raise and maintain during the progress of the war—as these calculations, both of the enemy's strength and of our own, are meant to designate the number of effective rank and file.

If I rightly understand the plan in consideration, it requires for its execution 12,600 men, rank and file. Besides these to open passages through a wilderness for the march of the several bodies of troops, to provide the means of long and difficult transportations by land and water; to establish posts of communication for the security of our convoys; to build and man vessels of force, necessary for acquiring a superiority on the Lakes;—these and many other purposes, peculiar to these enterprises, which would be tedious in detail, will demand a much larger proportion of artificers and persons to be employed in manual and laborious offices, than are usual in the ordinary course of military operations. When we add the whole together, the aggregate number of men requisite for the service of the ensuing campaign, will be little less than double the number heretofore in the field; but to be more certain in the calculation, it may be placed at only one half more.

Experience is the only rule to judge by in the present case. Every expedient has been exhausted in the preceding campaigns to raise men, and it was found impossible to get together a greater force than we had, though the safety and success of the cause seemed absolutely to require it. The natural and direct inference therefore is, that the resources of the country were inadequate to a larger supply. I cannot then see that we can hope upon any principle, to be equal to so much greater exertions next year, when the people and the army appear to grow daily more tired of the war, and the depreciation of our money continually increasing, and of consequence

proving a smaller temptation to induce men to engage.

The state of our supplies for transporting and subsisting the troops will stand upon a footing equally bad. We have encountered extreme difficulties in these respects and have found, that it was full as much as we were competent to, to feed the army we have already had, and enable it to keep the field, and perform the movements required by the contingencies of the service. It is not likely that these difficulties will diminish, but on the contrary they will rather multiply, as the value of our currency lessens; and the enormous prices to which provisions have risen and the artificial scarcity created by monopolies, with what we have to fear from the effect of the same spirit, give us no reason to flatter ourselves, that our future prospects can be much better. In this situation of things we are hardly warranted to expect, that we shall have it in our power to satisfy the demands of numbers so much greater, than we have yet had to supply; especially if we consider that the scene of our operations has hitherto been in the heart of the country furnishing our resources, and which of course facilitated the drawing them out; and that we shall then be carrying on the war at an immense distance, in a country wild and uncultivated, incapable of affording any aid, and great part of it hostile. We cannot in this case depend on temporary or occasional supplies, as we have been accustomed, but must have ample magazines laid up before hand. The labor and expence in forming these, and

transporting the necessary stores of every kind for the use of the troops, will be increased to a degree that can be more easily conceived than described. The transportation must be a great part of the way through deserts, affording no other forage than herbage; and from this circumstance, our principal subsistence of the flesh kind must be salted, which would not only be an additional expence, in the additional consumption of so scarce and dear an article as salt, but would greatly increase the difficulty both of providing and transporting. My letter of the 29th Ulto., transmitting a copy of one from the Quartermaster-General, which I had the honor of addressing to Congress and to which I wish to refer, will point out the difficulties and daily expence attending our supplies of the article of flour only, in our present circumstances, exclusive of its cost, and lay the foundation for a sort of comparative estimate to be formed, of those that would attend the support of the troops, when employed at so great a distance.

If in addition to all this, we should have the French fleet to supply during the winter, the likelihood of which I have no sufficient information to ground a judgment upon, it will appear still more impracticable to furnish the supplies requisite for the extensive operations proposed. But independent of this, the improbability of it is, in my apprehension, implicitly too great to justify the undertaking.

This reasoning is found on a supposition that the enemy do not evacuate their present posts at New York and Rhode Island; nor can we presume upon

any past appearances so far as to determine the contrary, and enter into a national contract, the fulfilment of which, at any rate in my judgment, will depend on this event. Opinions on the subject are various, and the arguments on both sides cogent,—circumstances hitherto very indecisive. At Rhode Island, there is nothing that looks like an evacuation, that I have heard of; at New York the length of time elapsed since the event has been expected, which cannot be satisfactorily accounted for, makes it not a little doubtful and problematical.

But if it were even certain, that the enemy would shortly leave these States, I should think our ability to carry on the expeditions meditated from the nature of the country and the remoteness from the source of our supplies, joined to the discouraging state of our finances too precarious to authorize a preconcerted agreement with a foreign power, binding ourselves to the attempt.

On the other hand, if we were certain of doing our part, a co-operation by the French would, in my opinion, be as delicate and precarious an enterprize, as can be imagined. All the reasons which induce France and the United States to wrest Canada from the dominion of England operate with her, perhaps more forcibly to use every possible effort for their defence. The loss of them would be a deadly blow to her trade and empire. To hope to find them in a defenceless state, must be founded in a supposition of the total incapacity of Britain, both by land and sea, to afford them protection. I should apprehend we

may run into a dangerous error by estimating her power so low.

We have been informed that a strong garrison has been lately sent to Halifax, amounting by report to about 4,000 men. A part of the detachments, which the enemy are now making from New York are currently said to be, and in all probability are, destined for that place. If they evacuate entirely, a very considerable part of their force will no doubt go there; and in any case we may expect, that re-inforcements will be thrown from thence into Canada, early in the spring. The English are now greatly superior to the French by sea in America, and will from every appearance continue so, unless Spain interpose—an event, which I do not know we are authorized to count upon. However, as I am destitute of information with respect to the state of European politics, this is a point upon which I can form but an imperfect judgment. But if it should not take place, I think it infinitely probable, from the maritime situation and advantages of Halifax, which is represented as the finest port and best naval arsenal in America, from the security it is calculated to give to the general trade and possessions of Britain, both on the continent and in the West Indies, that it will be a station for a larger naval force than the one intended to convoy the French troops. It will naturally be the principal rendezvous of the British ships of war in America. If this position be admitted, should the English have any knowledge or even suspicion of the designs of the French Court to send a fleet up

the river St. Lawrence, nothing will be easier than to intercept this fleet on its way, or to take or destroy it, after it has gotten in.

Nor can we flatter ourselves with keeping this business a secret. Congress perhaps will be surprised to be told, that it is already in more hands than they suspect, and, in the progress of the negotiation in France, it will get in many more. The preparations will announce the intention. It is indeed a part of the plan to avow the destination of the French troops, though this is to be contradicted by the manner of their clothing, &c. The stationing troops this winter, as is proposed, particularly on the Mohawk and Connecticut river, would be unequivocal proofs of the design. It must at least excite the strongest suspicions, so as to put the English nation upon their guard, and make them take precautions to counteract it.

But if the French troops should arrive before Quebec, I think their success against the strong places, fortified by every advantage of nature and of art, would be extremely doubtful. It is supposed this capital post will be found in so weak a condition as to make its surrender a matter of course, owing to the enemy's having previously drained themselves for the defence of Detroit, Niagara, St. Johns, Montreal, &c. But, we cannot depend that this will be the case. They may esteem it the part of prudence rather to sacrifice, or at least to hazard the extremities, in order to collect their strength at the heart. Montreal indeed, and the posts essential to it, must be defended, because

the possession of them would throw too large a part of the country into our hands. But if re-inforcements are sent to Canada early in the spring, a circumstance extremely likely, these may be attended to, without too far weakening the garrison of Quebec; and, as before observed, we cannot build upon their conduct's being regulated by an ignorance of our plans. The French troops instead of a coup de main would, in this case, be reduced to the necessity of carrying on a blockade.

I will now take the liberty to turn my attention towards the operations of our own troops. The one against Detroit, I shall at present say nothing about. If well conducted, I should hope that place would fall without very great difficulty. The case is very different with respect to Niagara. This, I am informed, is one of the strongest fortresses in America; and can only be reduced by regular approaches or by famine. In accomplishing this last war, and a conquest as far as Montreal, I believe, General Amherst exhausted two campaigns, with all the advantages which he derived from the united efforts of Britain and America, with every convenience for water transportation, including plenty of seamen, and with money that commanded every thing that either country could furnish. The former mode would require great perseverance, time, and labor, and an apparatus which it would be almost impracticable to transport. The latter is practicable, but very difficult. To effect it we must gain a superiority on the lakes. The enemy have already a respectable force there. If they suspect

our design, which they cannot fail to do from the measures to be taken, they may improve the interval in adding to it, and, by providing materials and artificers upon the spot, they may be able to increase it, so as to keep pace with us. It is therefore easy to see that we ought not to be too sanguine in the success of this expedition; and that, if a moderate force be employed in the defence of Niagara, without degarnishing Quebec and the intermediate posts, its reduction will be a very arduous task.

The body of troops to penetrate by way of the river St. Francis, must meet with great obstacles. They will have a march of about 150 miles from ye Co-os, which is about 160 beyond Hartford, a great part of which is through a hitherto uninhabited and trackless country, with an immense train of wagons. All the stores and provisions for the whole march, and the future supply of the troops, at least till they should get footing in Canada, must accompany them from the beginning. The impediments and delays in such a march, almost exceed conception. When arrived at the St. Lawrence, fresh obstacles probably would present themselves. The presumption is, that if the enemy could not make head there, they would desolate the country, through which they were to pass, destroy all the provision and forage, remove every kind of water craft, and demolish the materials for building others. These precautions being taken on the Sorel and St. Lawrence would pretty effectually obstruct our progress both to Montreal and Cadoroqui, to say nothing of the rapidity of the current, and the

numerous rifts between Montreal and Lagalette. When we deliberately consider all the obstacles in the execution, and the difficulties we shall find in preparing the vast magazines required, which have been already enumerated, if within the compass of our resources, we shall be led to think it not very improbable, that this body may be unable to penetrate Canada, at least in time to co-operate with the French troops, if a co-operation should be necessary. The situation of these troops, then, would be delicate and dangerous. Exposed to a defeat from the united force of the enemy, in great danger of having their retreat cut off by a superior naval force, in the river, they would have every thing to fear.

On the other hand if our operation should be as successful as we may flatter ourselves, a tempest or a British fleet may deprive us of the expected aid; and, at a critical moment we may find ourselves in the bosom of an enemy's country, obliged to combat their whole force, with one inferior, and reduced by a tedious and wasting march. The five thousand men, when they arrived in Canada, would probably little exceed four capable of service, and would be still less, if, out of them, we should establish posts as we advanced to ensure a retreat, and protect escorts of provisions, which must follow for future support. Thus an accident in either case, would involve the defeat of the whole project, and the catastrophe might be attended with the most unhappy consequences to America.

The plan proposed appears to me not only too ex-

tensive and beyond our abilities, but too complex. To succeed, it requires such a fortunate coincidence of circumstances as could hardly be hoped, and cannot be relied on: the departure of the enemy from these States, without which we cannot furnish the stipulated force or supplies to maintain them; such a want of power or want of foresight in the enemy as will oblige them to neglect the re-inforcements of Halifax and of Canada and prevent them, however conveniently situated, of disputing the passage of four ships of the line and four frigates up the River St. Lawrence, or attempting their destruction afterwards; such a combination of favorable incidents, as will enable several bodies, acting separately and independently by sea and land, and from different countries, to conform to times and periods so as to ensure a co-operation—these and many other circumstances must conspire, to give success to the enterprize.

Congress I am persuaded had powerful reasons for fixing the convoy at the number they have, and their superior information respecting the affairs of Europe at this juncture, enables them to judge much better than I can pretend to do, of its sufficiency. But, from the imperfect view I have of the matter, I have been led, in considering the subject, to look upon it as insufficient. From the general tenor of intelligence, the English outnumber the French in the Channel. In America, both on the Continent and in the Islands, they are greatly superior. If the last Toulon fleet is employed in the Mediterranean, the French may have the superiority there; but upon the

whole the balance of naval force seems hitherto to be on the side of the English. If we add to this, that the number of ships of war in the French ports, built or building, bears no comparison to the number in the English ports; and that Britain, notwithstanding the diminution she has suffered, is still a kingdom of great maritime resources, we shall be disposed to conclude, that the preponderance is too likely to continue where it is. The interposition of Spain indeed, would make a very interesting change; but her backwardness heretofore, seems to be an argument that she is withheld from interfering, by some weighty political motives; and how long these may continue to restrain her, is a question I am unqualified to determine.

Besides these general objections to the plan which have been stated, there appear to me to be some particular ones, which I shall take the liberty to point out.

In the first place, I observe there are to be 5000 militia employed in the two expeditions against Detroit and Niagara. The training into service so large a number composed chiefly of husbandmen, in addition to what may be found necessary for other exigencies on the coast at so interesting a season of the year, will certainly be very injurious to the culture of our lands, and must tend to add to the deficiency supplies. But this, tho' not to be overlooked, is not the principal objection. In the expedition against Detroit, militia perhaps may answer, as it is not a post of very great strength, and may possibly be aban-

doned on, or in a little time after, the approach of a force, that cannot be opposed in the field, and the garrison proceed to reinforce that of Niagara; but even here, troops of another kind would be far preferable. However, the case will be very different with respect to the last. It is, as I have beforementioned, one of the strongest fortresses of America and demands for its reduction the very best of troops. Militia have neither patience nor perseverance for a siege. This has been demonstrated by all the experience we have had. An attempt to carry on one which should materially depend on them, would be liable to be frustrated by their inconstancy, in the most critical moments. Agreeable to the plan under consideration, 3,500 out of 5,600 are to be militia.

It is a part of the plan, that the troops sent against Detroit, whether successful or not, are to form a junction with those at Niagara. It appears to me on the contrary that the expedition against Detroit, under the present arrangement must stand on its own bottom, and have no other object than the reducing that place, and destroying the adjacent Indian settlements. Lake Erie is certainly occupied by two armed vessels of sixteen and eighteen guns, and it is said by five or six others of smaller size, having two, three, and four guns each, which, while the enemy hold Niagara, will prevent the communication of our troops by way of the Lake, to say nothing of the want of batteaus for transportation. A communication by land must be performed through an extent of

more than 400 miles, and a great part of this at least under many disadvantages of route, and thro' tribes of hostile Indians.

My knowledge of the country is not sufficiently accurate to enable me to discover the reasons which determined Congress to divide the force destined against Niagara, and to appoint the march of one body from Ononguaga to that place. It seems to me, however, that this disposition might be subject to one great inconvenience, which is, that if each column be not superior to the whole collective force of the enemy, they risk being beaten separately and successively, besides the trouble and expence of preparing, as it were, for two expeditions instead of one, of opening two roads instead of one, and the uncertainty of a co-operation, if no disaster should happen to either, at the moment when it might be necessary. The inquiries I have as yet had it in my power to make, are opposed to the practicability of conveying cannon in the route from Ononguaga to Niagara, or at least place it as a point infinitely doubtful; and without cannon, nothing can be effected against that post. Upon the whole, the great matter essential to success against Niagara, is to subdue the enemy's force on Lake Erie and Ontario, particularly the latter. This once done and the garrison by that mean cut off from its supplies, the fort will be likely to fall an easy prey. Here our efforts should be directed; nor do I at present perceive the purposes to be answered by the body going from Ononguaga, unless the devastation of the inter-

mediate Indian villages be the object, which perhaps might not be equal to the risk, labor, and expence; and the more so, as they would fall of course, if we should succeed in the general operation.

The cantoning five thousand troops this winter on Connecticut River, under our present prospects will, in my opinion, be impracticable, and, in any case, inadvisable. When I had the honor of writing Congress in September last, on the subject of a winter campaign into Canada, I had been led by General Bayley and other gentlemen acquainted with the country, to expect that very considerable magazines of provisions might be laid up, on the upper parts of that river; but it appears on experiment, that their zeal for the expedition had made them much too sanguine in the matter. The purchases fall far, very far, short of what was expected. The difficulties of transportation as represented by the Quarter Masters and Commissaries, supported by facts that speak for themselves, are so great and complicated, that I should have no hope of our being able from remote parts of the continent to throw in the quantity requisite for the subsisting these troops during the winter, and, at the same time, of forming the magazines which would be necessary to prosecute the expedition in the spring. We may be endeavoring to form the magazines; but the troops cannot be on the spot this winter; otherwise they will exhaust the provision as fast as it can be collected. The same objection appears to the stationing troops on the Mohawk River.

In estimating our force for the next campaign, it is to be considered, that upwards of four thousand of the present army will have completed their term of service by the last of May next, and that a great proportion of the remainder will have done the same about the close of the ensuing fall; unless they can be induced to re-engage, of which the ill-success of our present exertions to inlist those, whose engagements are about to expire, affords but an infavorable prospect. This, and the general temper of the officers, dissatisfied much with their situation, will suggest a strong argument against the extensive projects in contemplation.

In whatever point of light the subject is placed, our ability to perform our part of the contract appears to me infinitely too doubtful and precarious to justify the undertaking. A failure, as I have already observed, would involve consequences too delicate and disagreeable to be hazarded. But at the same time that my judgment is against this, I am clearly of opinion, that we should attempt every thing that our circumstances will permit; but as the extent of our power must be regulated by many possible events, I would wish to hold ourselves free, to act according to either possibility, and as a clearer view of our resources shall authorize. If the enemy entirely leave these States, it will produce a vast change in our affairs and new prospects may open, of which we can at present have but a very imperfect idea. It would be a great step towards raising the value of our money, which would give a new spring to our military

operations. We may be able to undertake much more than we can now foresee.

If the enemy attempt to keep posts in these States, a primary object will be to expel them, if in our power; if not, we must make proper provision to bar their depredations; and must turn our attention to the security of our frontiers, by pursuing such measures as shall be within the reach of our abilities.

Though we may not be able to launch into so wide a field as we could wish, some thing upon a more partial scale may be enterprised. Detroit and Niagara may perhaps be reduced, though Canada may not be an accession to the Confederacy. With a view to what is possible, preparations may be going on, and we can make such an application of them, as we shall find practicable. As there is no time to be lost in doing this, I shall give the necessary orders, so far as relate to the article of provision, which indeed has been already done in part. Magazines of forage, materials for boat and ship building, and other articles must also be provided; which will depend on the final arrangements, and more definitive instructions of Congress. These measures will be necessary to be taken, whether the present plan is carried on, or whether some thing less extensive, depending wholly on ourselves, is substituted in its place. I shall wait the further orders of Congress for the government of my conduct in delivering the plan to the Marquis, as their resolution seems to require; or in transmitting it immediately to Doctor Franklin, as the letter from the committee seems to direct. At present I am

under some doubt concerning the intention of Congress in this particular. I have the honor, &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, November 19th.

"The Committee to whom was referred the letter of Genl. Washington of the 11th instant, report:

"That the reasons assigned by the Genl. agt. an expedition to Canada appear to the Committee to be well founded and to merit the approbation of Congress.

"That they are fully of the opinion that nothing of great importance can be attempted in that quarter unless the enemy should evacuate the posts which they now hold within these United States.

"That it appears nevertheless highly probable that they will evacuate such posts before the active part of the ensuing campaign.

"That whatever may be the situation of these States in other respects nothing can be done unless the necessary preparations therefore be made in due season.

"That the Committee are of opinion the complexity of the plan heretofore adopted by Congress, altho' calculated to distract the views of the enemy, may be nevertheless attended with such disadvantages as to overbalance the good consequences expected from it, and therefore that it may be simplified to advantage.

"That they entirely agree with the General that Niagara cannot be carried without commanding the Lakes Erie and Ontario, particularly the latter. But they must at the same time observe that this Post is of such importance to the United States as to render it proper to do every thing which is practicable to acquire the possession of it.

"That therefore it is in the opinion of the committee proper to direct the General to cause every previous preparation to be made with all convenient speed for the subjection of that fortress, and also to carry on such further operations to the northward as time and circumstances shall point out hereafter.

"That they are of opinion that the question whether any and what force can or will be sent to the Emancipation of Quebec by his most christian Majesty must depend upon circumstances and situation which cannot at present be known on this side of the Atlantic. But they conceive it will be in his power to operate with effect for that purpose, and as well from the importance of the object, as from his former exertions in favor of these States, they doubt not but that in such case he will readily afford his assistance.

"That they are therefore of opinion that the General should be directed to write to the Marquis de la Fayette upon that subject, and also to write to the Minister of those States very fully to the end that in case eventual measures may be taken, an armament should be sent from France to Quebec, to co-operate therewith to the utmost degree which the finances and resources of these

TO HENRY LAURENS.

FREDG., 14th Novr., 1778.

DR. SIR,

This will be accompanied by an official letter on the subject of the proposed expedition against Canada. You will perceive I have only considered it in a military light; indeed I was not authorized to consider it in any other; and I am not without apprehensions, that I may be thought, in what I have done, to have exceeded the limits intended by Congress. But my solicitude for the public welfare, which I think deeply interested in this affair, will, I hope, justify me in the eyes of all those, who view things through that just medium. I do not know, Sir, what may be your sentiments in the present case; but,

States will admit." The report is in the manuscript of Gouverneur Morris. See *Journals of Congress*, 5 December, 1778.

"When Col. Graham was up here I received from Count d'Estaing a number of declarations, to the french inhabitants of America addressed to them in the name of his most christian majesty. Each of the gentlemen who were at table got one of those declarations. As I do not think it proper they should be made public by me in the first instance, or that they should creep into New York before they have an operation elsewhere. I have therefore recalled all the declarations but that one in Col. Graham's possession. You will be pleased to recover this as soon as possible and transmit it to me.

"In the letter from Mr. Clark the A. Commissary Genl. to the Convention army he requests a passport by land; and an examination of his letters, in order that he may not be under the necessity of going to Boston in case the troops should be on their march. You will examine the letters he brought out of N. York and give him a permission to proceed by the nearest route to Cambridge or the Convention troops, previously taking his parole that he will not communicate with the people to the injury or disadvantage of the States either directly or indirectly.

"The inclosures you will send into N. Y. by flag and should Mr. Clarke want to write me, you will give him the same conveyance.

"P. S. In case Col. Graham has had the declaration translated you will do every thing to recover such from the persons who may have them."—*Washington to Brigadier-General Scott*, 14 November, 1778.

whatever they are, I am sure I can confide in your honor and friendship, and shall not hesitate to unbosom myself to you on a point of the most delicate and important nature.

The question of the Canadian expedition, in the form it now stands, appears to me one of the most interesting that has hitherto agitated our national deliberations. I have one objection to it, untouched in my public letter, which is, in my estimation, insurmountable, and alarms all my feelings for the true and permanent interests of my country. This is the introduction of a large body of French troops into Canada, and putting them in possession of the capital of that Province, attached to them by all the ties of blood, habits, manners, religion, and former connexion of government. I fear this would be too great a temptation to be resisted by any power actuated by the common maxims of national policy. Let us realize for a moment the striking advantages France would derive from the possession of Canada; the acquisition of an extensive territory, abounding in supplies for the use of her Islands; the opening a vast source of the most beneficial commerce with the Indian nations, which she might then monopolize; the having ports of her own on this continent independent of the precarious good will of an ally; the engrossing of the whole trade of Newfoundland whenever she pleased, the finest nursery of seamen in the world; the security afforded to her Islands; and, finally, the facility of awing and controlling these States, the natural and most formidable rival of every

maritime power in Europe. Canada would be a solid acquisition to France on all these accounts, and because of the numerous inhabitants, subjects to her by inclination, who would aid in preserving it under her power against the attempt of every other.

France, acknowledged for some time past the most powerful monarchy in Europe by land, able now to dispute the empire of the sea with Britain, and if joined with Spain, I may say, certainly superior, possessed of New Orleans on our right, Canada on our left, and seconded by the numerous tribes of indians in our rear from one extremity to the other, a people so generally friendly to her, and whom she knows so well to conciliate, would, it is much to be apprehended, have it in her power to give law to these States.

Let us suppose, that, when the five thousand french troops (and under the idea of that number twice as many might be introduced) were entered the city of Quebec, they should declare an intention to hold Canada, as a pledge and surety for the debts due to France from the United States, or, under other specious pretences, hold the place till they can find a bone of contention, and, in the mean while, should excite the Canadians to engage in supporting their pretences & claims; what should we be able to say, with only four or five thousand men to carry on the dispute? It may be supposed, that France would not choose to renounce our friendship by a step of this kind, as the consequence would be a reunion with England on some terms or other, and the loss

of what she had acquired in so violent and unjustifiable a manner, with all the advantages of an alliance with us. This, in my opinion, is too slender a security against the measure, to be relied on. The truth of the position will entirely depend on naval events. If France and Spain should unite, and obtain a decided superiority by Sea, a reunion with England would avail very little, and might be set at defiance. France, with a numerous army at command, might throw in what number of land forces she thought proper, to support her pretensions; and England, without men, without money, and inferior on her favorite element, could give no effectual aid to oppose them. Resentment, reproaches, and submission seem to be all that would be left to us. Men are very apt to run into extremes. Hatred to England may carry some into an excess of Confidence in France, especially when motives of gratitude are thrown into the scale. Men of this description would be unwilling to suppose France capable of acting so ungenerous a part. I am heartily disposed to entertain the most favorable sentiments of our new ally, and to cherish them in others to a reasonable degree. But it is maxim, founded on the universal experience of mankind, that no nation is to be trusted farther than it is bound by its interest; and no prudent statesman or politician will venture to depart from it. In our circumstances we ought to be particularly cautious; for we have not yet attained sufficient vigor and maturity to recover from the shock of any false step, into which we may unwarily fall.

If France should even engage in the scheme, in the first instance, with the purest intentions, there is the greatest danger that, in the progress of the business, invited to it by circumstances, and perhaps urged on by the solicitations and wishes of the Canadians, she would alter her views.

As the Marquis clothed his proposition, when he spoke it to me, it would seem to originate wholly with himself; but, it is far from impossible, that it had its birth in the Cabinet of France, and was put into this artful dress to give it the readier currency. I fancy that I read in the countenances of some people, on this occasion, more than the disinterested zeal of allies. I hope I am mistaken, and that my fears of mischief make me refine too much, and awaken jealousies that have no sufficient foundation. But upon the whole, Sir, to wave every other consideration, I do not like to add to the number of our national obligations. I would wish, as much as possible, to avoid giving a foreign power new claims of merit for services performed to the United States, and would ask no assistance that is not indispensable. I am, with the truest attachment and most perfect confidence, dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] President Laurens wrote in reply:—"I believe, and upon good grounds, the scheme for an expedition into Canada in concert with the arms of France, originated in the breast of the Marquis de Lafayette, encouraged probably, by conferences with Count d'Estaing, and I also believe it to be the offspring of the purest motives, so far as respects that origin; but this is not sufficient to engage my concurrence in a measure big with eventful mischiefs. As deeply as my very limited time and faculties had suffered me to penetrate, I had often contemplated our delicate connexion with France; and, although it is painful to talk of one's own foresight, I had viewed and foretold fifteen months ago

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

FREDERICKSBURG, 20th Novr., 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,

Congress seem to have a strong desire to undertake an expedition against Canada. The practicability of it depends upon the employment the Enemy

the humiliating state, to which our embryo independence would be reduced by courting from that nation the loan of more money, than should be actually necessary for the support of the army and of our unfortunate navy.

"I was one of the six unsuccessful opponents to the resolution for borrowing money from France for paying the interest of our loan-office certificates. We have in this single article plunged the Union into a vast amount of debt; and from neglecting to exert our very small abilities, or even to show a leading disposition to cancel any part of the former demand against us, our bills for that interest are now floating in imminent danger of dishonor and disgrace. Fully persuaded of the true value of national honor, I anxiously wished to support our own by a propriety and consistency of conduct; and I dreaded the consequences of subjecting our happiness to the disposal of a powerful creditor, who might on very specious grounds interpret national honor to our destruction. I warned my friends against the danger of mortgaging these States to foreign powers. Every million of livres you borrow implies a pledge of your lands; and it is optional in your creditor to be repaid at the bank of England with an exorbitant premium, or to collect the money due to him in any of your ports, and according to his own mode, whenever national interest shall require the support of pretended national honor.

"Hence your Excellency will perceive what were my feelings, when the propositions for subduing Canada, by the aid of a French fleet and army, were broached to me. I demurred exceedingly to the Marquis's scheme, and expressed some doubts of the concurrence of Congress. This was going as far as I dared consistently with my office, or considering him as a gentleman of equal honor and tenacity. I trusted the issue of his application to the sagacity of Congress. The business was referred to a committee, who conferred with the Marquis. Their report was framed agreeably to his wishes, but the House very prudently determined to consult the Commander-in-chief previously to a final determination; and, although your Excellency's observations are committed, I am much mistaken if every member of Congress is not decided in his opinion in favor of them. If the prosecution of so extensive a project is, from the present state of our army and funds, impracticable on our part, it becomes altogether unnecessary to discuss the point in a political view: and I trust the Marquis will be satisfied with such reasonings, in apology for our desisting from the pursuit of his favorite enterprise, as our circumstances will dictate.

"The immense debts, which we are involved in abroad and at home, demand

intend to give us on the Seaboard next Campaign, on their strength in Canada, the state of our resources, and other circumstances, some of which are too much buried in obscurity, others too much in the field of conjecture to form any decisive opinion of at this time.

the most serious attention, and call for an exertion of the collected wisdom of all these States, in order to secure what we have saved from the ravages of the enemy. I am very short-sighted, if there be at this time any encouragement for attempting distant conquests. I have been uniformly averse to every proposition, which tended to dissipate our strength, and to accumulate our debt. Events have confirmed my opinions, and at this instant, taking in view all circumstances, I have doubts of the policy, and more of the success, of the pending expedition against East Florida."—*MS. Letter*, November 20th.

It is a curious political fact, that, notwithstanding the suspicions, which prevailed on the subject in the United States, the French government was opposed to an expedition against Canada, or any attempt to take that province from the English. It was the settled policy of the French king, from the beginning of the contest, that Canada and Nova Scotia should remain in the power of Great Britain. This may appear the more singular, as it was generally supposed, that one of the main objects of France in joining the United States was to recover Canada, and regain a portion of that territory and influence on the continent of America, which she had lost in the preceding war. The French minister in America was instructed not to oppose any scheme, that Congress might form against Canada, but at the same time not to afford any encouragement of aid from France in such an enterprise. This fact was not known, of course, to the Marquis de Lafayette, nor to Count d'Estaing, when he issued his *Declaration* to the Canadians, dated at Boston on the 28th of October.—See Sparks' *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, vol. i., p. 189.

During the course of his deliberations, Washington consulted Mr. Jay, who was then at Fishkill, not far from head-quarters; and he was unquestionably much benefited by the counsels of that zealous patriot and sagacious statesman. The author of the *Life of John Jay* (vol. i., p. 83) says: "They both concurred in disapproving the plan; the General afterwards addressed a letter to Congress on the subject, in which he urged a variety of objections to the plan, but, for obvious reasons, omitted the one which had most weight in his mind, the probability that the French would insist on retaining Canada if conquered by their aid, and the danger of permitting them thus to gain a footing on the frontier of the United States." The above letter will show, that he took effectual means to make his sentiments known to Congress. By an oversight, also, the author fixes the date of the transaction in the autumn of 1777, which is a year too early. A similar error occurs, respecting the same subject, in the *Life of Hamilton*, vol. i., p. 154.—*Sparks.*

But there is not a moment to spare in preparing for such an event, if hereafter it should be found expedient to undertake it.

In your Letter of the 9th ulto., which you did me the favor of writing upon this subject, you are opposed to an Enterprise against Canada by the way of Co'os, and assign cogent reasons for not making it a *principal* dependence. You are also against the rout by Oswego; but, as an Expedition that way had not been suggested, you do not touch upon the reasons, but recomd. the common rout by the way of Lake Champlain, and a Winter Expedition, if the Ice will admit of it.

In general, Winter Campaigns are destructive to Troops, and nothing but pressing necessity, and the best state of preparation, can justify them. I fear neither the State of our Provisions, the condition of our men, nor the situation of our officers (whose distresses, on acct. of the uncommonly high prices of every necessary of life, are a source of general discontent and indifference to the Service), would warrant the undertaking, even if the state of the Lakes, and the force of Canada, should invite the measure. I am clear, also, that neither force nor stratagem can give us a well-founded hope of a decisive superiority in naval strength upon Lake Champlain, where the Enemy are at present so powerful.

Your scheme for preparing materials for building two large Ships upon this Lake is plausible, and, if only one or two were entrusted with the Secret, practicable. But when fifty men are to be consulted, before

the measure can be adopted, when a number of these (inattentive to the importance of keeping military manœuvres secret), make matter of incautious if not common conversation of ye Plans in contemplation & a knowledge of them by that means gets into the hand of the Enemy's emissaries, who are industrious in acquiring and diligent in communicating every piece of useful information; I say, when this is the case, I can entertain but little hope of success from a project of this kind. If, from these considerations, a Winter's Expedition is found impracticable or unadvisable; if the conquest of the Enemy's Fleet on Lake Champlain is not to be accomplished by force nor by stratagem; and if an Enterprise by the way of Co'os is inadmissible, as a primary object:—

1st. What door is left open for an Expedition against Canada?

2d. How far is there a moral certainty of extending the American arms into that country in the course of next campaign?

3d. And how far short of the entire conquest, and annexation of Canada to the Union, would give permanent peace and security to the Frontiers of these States?

In considering these points, and such others as may hereafter occur, it will be necessary to take the matter up in two points of view; presuming, in ye one case, that the enemy will evacuate the United States; in the other, that they mean to retain New York and Rhode Island as Garrison Towns. In dis-

cussing them with that freedom and candor, which I mean to do, you will readily perceive that it is my wish to enter into an unlimited and confidential correspondence with you on this subject. Where then, in addition, to the above queries;

4th. Lie the difficulties of an expedition against Canada by the way of Lake Ontario?

5th. Why did General Amherst take this rout, (when Lake Champlain was open, free, and so much more direct,) if he did not foresee that some apparent advantages were to be derived from it?

6th. What resources can be drawn from the State of New York towards the support of an Expedition of this kind?

7th. At what places would it be necessary to establish posts between Albany and Oswego, for the support of the communication, and security of Convoys? And

8th. How many men will be required at each Post for the above purposes, and at Oswego?

I mean to hazard my thoughts upon a Plan of operations for next Campaign, if the enemy should evacuate these States and leave us at liberty; but being unacquainted with the country, and many other matters essentially necessary to form a right judgment upon so extensive a project, I am sensible that it will be very defective, and shall consider it as the part of friendship in you, to observe upon every part of my plan with the utmost freedom.

I have already laid it down as a position, that, unless a Winters Expedition can be undertaken with

to the more interior parts of the Country, and of course their ship-Carpenters, and materials for Ship-building, will be employed in that way.

The foregoing is a summary of my capital movement, to facilitate wch. I would, as has been before observed, advance a body of men from the Co'os. The motions of these should be regulated precisely by those of the main army, establishing Posts as they go, for the purposes of retreat, (in case of necessity,) and to protect convoys, if the main army should be able to penetrate Canada as far as Montreal. Several advantages will be derived from the advance of a body of Troops by the way of Co'os. First, strengthening ye belief, that we mean to enter by the way of St. John's; secondly, it will serve to distract the Enemy in their councils and measures, and either divide their force & render them weak at all points, or, by keeping them collected, expose the interior or exterior part of the Country to a successful and fortunate blow from one or the other of these bodies; and will, in the third place, open a communication for ample supplies of live Cattle, if we should have occasion for them for Troops in Canada.

Under this plan, it is not only possible, but to be expected, that the Enemy, if they should come at the knowledge of our real designs, would oppose their whole naval force to our Troops on lake Ontario, and their Land force against those by the way of Co'os. In this case I should be glad of solutions to the questions which follow.

9th. Is there any practicable rout from Johnson's

Hall, or any other part of Mohawk River, or from the upper parts of Hudson's River, to a River emptying itself into the St. Lawrence a little above la galette, by which we could avoid lake Ontario, and the armed Vessels on those waters, altogether? and if this is not to be effected, and a superiority on the lake is despaired of, then I should wish to be informed,

10th. Whether Niagara can be approached with an army and ye necessary apparatus, by a route, which will avoid this Lake?

11th. What will be the distance of the march from Fort Schuyler? the kind of country thro' which it is to be made, and the difficulties which are to be expected?

12th. The advantages and disadvantages of maintaining that post, after possessing it, Canada remaining in the hands of ye Enemy?

For the more certain reduction of Niagara, and for the Peace and safety of the Frontiers of Pensylvania and Virginia, a part of my plan is, to advance a body of troops from Pittsburg by way of the Allegany, le bœuf (or French Creek,) and Prisquile to the above Post, if it be practicable; of which I am not certain, as the Enemy have armed Vessels on lake Erie, and I am ignorant of the kind of Country between Prisquile and Niagara, in case it is to be attempted by a land march. But admitting the impracticability of this, an Expedition to Detroit, which Congress meditated last Fall, and still have in contemplation, will keep the Indians in that Quarter employed, and prevent them from affording succor

to the Garrison of Niagara. The preparations necessary to the one will answer for the other, while the one to Niagara may be concealed under the Idea of going to Detroit.

Although, under the present appearances of things, it is a matter of very great doubt whether we shall be in circumstances to prosecute a project of this kind, I have nevertheless given orders for magazines of Provisions to be laid in at Albany and on Connecticut River, from the lower Co'os to No. Four, and have ordered the Saw-Mills abt. Fort Anne to be set to work, and shall be obliged to you for your advice to Colo. Lewis on this occasion. If it should fall in your way to ascertain with precision the number and strength of the vessels upon Lake Ontario, and down to la galette, and the force of the Garrisons at Niagara and Oswegatchie, I shall thank you, and must beg leave to remind you of the mode you suggested to procure intelligence from Canada in the course of the Winter, as it is of infinite importance to be well informed of the strength, expectation, and preparation of the Enemy. To receive the acct. through different Channels is also essential, to avoid deception.

I shall be very happy to see you at the head-Quarters of the army, in your way to Philadelphia, whenever it happens. Governor Clinton wrote me that he should be at Albany in the course of a few days. As I have implicit confidence in him, it will be quite agreeable to me, that you should converse largely with him upon the sevl. matters herein contained, and then furnish me with your observations upon my plan, and the most effectual means of carrying it, or

some other, into execution, with the necessary preparation to be made during the winter. With the greatest esteem and regard, I remain, dear Sir, &c.

P. S. Since writing this Letter I have seen a very intelligent Man who was many years a liver at and about Detroit.—He was sent prisoner in May last from that Post to Quebec—and from Quebec escaped the 7th of October.—He has given me a very accurate Acct. of the Enemy's Naval force on the two Lakes (Erie and Ontario,) at the time he was in that Country, but I should still be glad to see how far other accts. corrispond with his and whether they have made any late progress in ship building since that period. He is particular also in his acct. of the strength of the Garrisons of Michilamakinack—Detroit—Niagara—and Oswegatchie as they stood in the spring, and adds that at the time he passed down the River, the Enemy were removing cannon from Oswegatchie to Buck Island which place he understood they meant to fortify.—When he left Canada Genl. Haldimand with more of the Troops were at the mouth of the Sorrel, very busy in fortifying that Post and strengthening themselves above on that River. —the received opinion in the Country being that an Expedition would be undertaken.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS..

HEAD-QUARTERS, FREDERICKSBURG,
27 November, 1778.

SIR,

I was yesterday honored with your favor of the 20th, with its several Inclosures.

Congress will be pleased to accept my acknowl-

edgments for the communication of the treaties between His Most Christian Majesty and the United States. The resolve respecting the exchange of Prisoners has been transmitted to Sir Harry Clinton, and I have appointed commissioners,[1] if he thinks proper, to meet his at Amboy the 7th of next month.

I have the pleasure to inform Congress, that the whole army, one brigade and the light corps excepted, is now in motion to the places of the respective cantonments for winter-quarters. I have thought it prudent to delay this event awhile, to give time for the convention troops to make some progress in crossing the North River, to prevent a possibility of

[1] Sir Henry Clinton had written to General Washington, November 10th, proposing a meeting of commissioners to agree on an exchange of the convention troops. As Washington considered these troops under the exclusive charge of Congress, he forwarded the letter to that assembly, and they passed a resolve authorizing an exchange upon the following principles: namely, that officers of equal rank should be first exchanged; next superior officers for an equivalent number of inferior; and if, after all the officers of the enemy should be exchanged, there should still be American officers in the hands of the British, these should be exchanged for an equivalent number of privates of the convention troops. Colonels Harrison and Hamilton were appointed by Washington as the American commissioners, and they met the British commissioners at Perth Amboy, on the 11th of December. The negotiation was ineffectual. The British commissioners wished to obtain a larger proportion of privates than officers. They proposed to exchange one half of the officers in their hands for those of equal or equivalent rank, and to receive privates, according to such a ratio as should be agreed upon, for the other half. They urged as a reason, that it was unjust and inhuman to separate the officers from the soldiers, whom they had been accustomed to command, and who had been their companions in captivity. This was a doctrine, which, however conformable to military rule, had not before been advanced during the present war; and, on this occasion, neither its equity nor expediency was obvious.

"As an exchange has not been effected, and Sir Henry Clinton has called for all our officers on parole, I shall, in consequence of the resolution of the 19th ulto., order the Commissary of Prisoners to require the immediate return of the Convention and any other officers with the Enemy on parole. I do not

accident. The third division passes this day; and, if no unexpected interruption happens, the whole will be over the 30th instant. When their passage is completed, the remaining troops kept in the field will immediately retire to quarters.

The disposition for winter-quarters is as follows. Nine brigades will be stationed on the west side of Hudson's River, exclusive of the Garrison at West Point; one of which, the North Carolina brigade, will be near Smith's Clove for the security of that pass, and as a reinforcement to West Point in case of necessity; another, the Jersey brigade, will be at Elizabethtown, to cover the lower part of Jersey;

mean, however, to include General Burgoyne in the demand, unless Congress should direct it; as there appear to me many political reasons for permitting him to remain in Britain in his present temper. But if Congress should differ from me in opinion on this point, I shall be happy to be informed, that measures may be pursued for his recall."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 16 December, 1778.

The following are the remarks of General Phillips on the subject. He had recently written to General Washington respecting an exchange of the convention troops, and was now on his march with them to Charlottesville. "Since I have been at Bethlehem," said he, "I have seen and read a Philadelphia newspaper containing the report made by your officers of their conference with Colonels O'Hara and Stephens. Had I seen it before, I believe I should not have troubled you with any overtures on my part; and yet I protest it to be my opinion, and I have not a doubt, that the American Congress will see the absolute necessity of allowing exchanges of complete corps of the troops of convention, if they mean really to promote or agree to any exchange. Upon any other condition there can be no more; for it is obvious that a cartel upon the resolution of Congress, taken literally, renders all your officers into a free and full activity of service, whereas the officers of the troops of convention would gain a change of place only, but be equally lost to the service as at present, the corps to which they belong being still detained. Under this description, there needs not any interposition of a superior power; for the officers have too high a sense of honor to desire to quit their corps in the moment of distress, and therefore would not wish to be exchanged partially. To exchange by ransom would effect the whole business to a mutual benefit by a general release."—*MS. Letter*, 16 January, 1779.

and the other seven, consisting of the Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania troops, will be at Middlebrook. Six brigades will be left on the east side of the river and at West Point; three of which (of the Massachusetts troops) will be stationed for the immediate defence of the Highlands; one at West Point, in addition to the Garrison already there; and the other two at Fishkill and the Continental Village. The remaining three brigades, composed of the New Hampshire and Connecticut troops and Hazen's regiment, will be posted in the vicinity of Danbury, for the protection of the country lying along the Sound, to cover our magazines lying on Connecticut River, and to aid the Highlands on any serious movement of the enemy that way.

The park of artillery will be at Pluckemin. The cavalry will be disposed of thus; Bland's regiment at Winchester in Virginia, Baylor's at Frederic or Hagerstown in Maryland, Moylan's at Lancaster in Pennsylvania, and Sheldon's at Durham in Connecticut. Lee's corps will be with that part of the army which is in the Jerseys, acting on the advanced posts. This comprehends the general distribution of the army, except Clinton's brigade of New York troops, Pulaski's corps, and some detached regiments and corps stationed at Albany and at different parts of the frontier, of which Congress have already been particularly advised. Genl. Putnam will command at Danbury, Genl. McDougall in the Highlands, and my own quarters will be in the Jerseys, in the neighborhood of Middlebrook.

This disposition appeared to me the best calculated to conciliate, as far as possible, these several objects: the protection of the country; the security of the important posts in the Highlands; the safety, discipline, and easy subsistence of the army. To have kept the Troops in a collected state would have increased infinitely the expense and difficulty of subsisting them, both with respect to forage and provisions; to have divided them into smaller cantonments would have made it far less practicable to maintain order and discipline among them, and would have put them less in a condition to control and prevent offensive operations on the side of the enemy, or to assemble to take advantage of any favorable opening, which their future situation may offer, should they be obliged to weaken themselves by further detachments, so far as to invite an enterprise against them.

By the estimate of the quartermaster and commissary general, it appears indispensable to have the principal part of the army on the other side of the North River. It was thought impracticable to furnish the necessary supplies of flour for the whole on this side of the river, from the immense difficulty and expense of transportation in the winter season, and from the exhausted state of the country with respect to forage. As this subject has been already fully before Congress, I shall not trouble them with a repetition of the details. In order as much as possible to reduce the demand of forage and facilitate the supplies, I have given directions, when the several

divisions arrive at their cantonments, to send away to convenient places, at a distance from them, all the horses not absolutely requisite to carry on the ordinary business of the army.

It is unnecessary to add, that the Troops must again have recourse to the expedient of hutting, as they did last year. But, as they are now well clad, and we have had more leisure to make some little preparations for winter-quarters, I hope they will be in a more comfortable situation, than they were in the preceding winter. With the highest respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO JOSEPH REED, PRESIDENT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

MIDDLEBROOK, 12 Dec., 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 7th inst, by Mr. Laurens, came to my hands a day or two ago; previous to which I should have done myself the pleasure of congratulating you, (which I now do very sincerely,) on your late election to the government of Pennsylvania, had not Sir Harry's late extra manœuvre up the North-River kept me upon the march and countermarch from the 5th till yesterday, when I arrived at these my quarters for the winter, and employed too much of my attention to investigate his designs, to indulge in more agreeable amusements.[2]

[1] Read in Congress, December 3d.

[2] Washington arrived at Elizabethtown on the afternoon of the 3d, and on the following night received intelligence that the enemy had proceeded in force up the North River as far as King's Ferry, where they had landed and burnt a small house upon the wharf. Setting out from Elizabethtown at four o'clock

What did or could prompt the knight to this expedition, is beyond the reach of my conception, considering the unseasonableness of it. Three things only appeared to me probable: a rescue of the Convention troops, a stroke at the rear of our army, or a surprise of our posts in the Highlands. The two first I had seen perfectly out of his reach before I left the North River; and, not conceiving that he could miss it so much in point of intelligence, as to mistime matters so egregiously, (if either of the other two was his object,) it followed, of consequence, that the last must be his aim; and, though I had left them as I thought in a state of security, and in the hands of a good officer, McDougall, I could not help being uneasy, lest some disaster might befall them; and posted back from Elizabethtown on the morning of the 5th and got within twelve or fifteen miles of King's Ferry, when I was met by an express, informing me that the enemy had landed at that place, set fire to two small log'd houses, destroyed nine barrels of spoiled herrings, and had set sail for New York. Thus ended this notable expedition, which was conducted (in the preparation) with so much secrecy, that all the flag-boats to and from the city were stopped, and not a mouse permitted to creep within their lines. The only bad consequence we have felt from it, (and, as the weather has turned out, not a trifling one,) is, that it has

on the morning of the 5th, he was proceeding to Middlebrook, and was met by an express a few miles from Paramus with information of the enemy's having fallen down the river again. He returned to Paramus, and was again at Elizabethtown on the 8th, where he remained until the 11th.

delayed the Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania troops four days in hutting, and has occasioned them to march through snow and bad roads to come at their ground, instead of having sunshine and good ones, which was the case before the storm on Thursday last.

It gives me very sincere pleasure to find, that there is likely to be a coalition of the Whigs in your State, (a few only excepted,) and that the Assembly of it are so well disposed to second your endeavors in bringing those murderers of our cause, the monopolizers, forestallers, and engrossers, to condign punishment. It is much to be lamented, that each State long ere this has not hunted them down as the pests of society, and the greatest enemies we have to the happiness of America. I would to God, that one of the most atrocious in each State was hung in gibbets upon a gallows five times as high as the one prepared by Haman. No punishment, in my opinion, is too great for the man, who can build his greatness upon his country's ruin.[1]

[1] "It is most devoutly to be wished, that some happy expedient could be hit upon to restore credit to our paper emissions, and punish the infamous practice of forestalling and the engrossing such articles, as are essentially necessary to the very existence of the army, and which, by these practices, comes to it thro' the hands of these people at 50 p. ct. advance, to the great injury and depreciation of our money, by accumulating the quantum necessary for ordinary purposes to an enormous sum, which must end in a total stagnation of all purchases, unless some remedy can be soon and effectually applied. It is also most devoutly to be wished, that faction was at an end, and that those, to whom every thing dear and valuable is entrusted, would lay aside party views and return to first principles. Happy, happy, thrice happy country, if such was the government of it! But, alas, we are not to expect that the path will be strowed with flowers. That great and good Being, who rules the Universe, has disposed matters otherwise, and for wise purposes I am persuaded."—*Washington to Reed*, 27 November, 1778.

General Lee's publication in Dunlap's Gazette of the 3d inst., (and I have seen no other,) puts me in a disagreeable situation.[1] I have neither the leisure nor inclination to enter the lists with him in a newspaper; and so far as his production points to personality, I can and do from my inmost soul despise it; but, when he has most barefacedly misrepresented facts in some places, and thrown out insinuations in others, that have not the smallest foundation in truth, not to attempt a refutation is a tacit acknowledgment of the justice of his assertions; for, though there are thousands, who know how unsupported his piece is, there are yet tens of thousands that know nothing of the matter, and will be led naturally to conclude, that bold and confident assertions uncontradicted must be founded in truth.

It became a part of General Lee's plan, from the moment of his arrest, though it was an event solicited by himself, to have the world believe that he was a persecuted man, and that party was at the bottom of it. But however convenient it may have been for his purpose to establish this doctrine, I defy him, or his most zealous partisans, to adduce a single instance in proof of it, unless bringing him to tryal at his own request, is considered in this light. I can do more; I will defy any person, out of my own family, to say that I have ever mentioned his name, after his tryal commenced if it was to be avoided; and, when it was not, if I have not studiously declined expressing any

[1] This was a long and elaborate article, signed by General Lee, and containing a free discussion of the affair at Monmouth, and of some points relating to his trial. It was reprinted in *Rivington's Gazette.*

sentiment of him or his behavior. How far this conduct accords with his, let his own breast decide. If he conceives that I was opposed to him, because he found himself disposed to enter into a party against me; if he thought I stood in his road to preferment, and therefore that it was convenient to lessen me in the esteem of my countrymen, in order to pave the way for his own advancement, I have only to observe, that, as I never entertained any jealousy of or apprehension from him, so neither did I ever do more, than common civility and proper respect to his rank required, to conciliate his good opinion. His temper and plans were too versatile and violent to attract my admiration; and that I have escaped the venom of his tongue and pen so long, is more to be wondered at than applauded; as it is a favor, that no officer, under whose immediate command he ever served, has the happiness, (if happiness can be thus denominated,) of boasting.

Were I to give in to private conveniency and amusement, I should not be able to resist the invitation of my friends to make Philadelphia, instead of a squeezed-up room or two, my quarters for the winter. But the affairs of the army require a constant attention and presence, and, circumstanced as matters are at this juncture, call for some degree of care and address to keep it from crumbling. As peace and retirement are my ultimate aim, and the most pleasing and flattering wish of my soul, every thing advancive of this end contributes to my satisfaction, however difficult and inconvenient in the attainment;

and will reconcile any place and all circumstances to my feelings, whilst I remain in service.

The officers of the army must be grateful for your endeavors to serve them; and those of your own State will, I trust, feel the salutary effects of your exertions in their favor. They really merit it; and resignation must cease to be wonderful, when it is a fact too notorious to be denied, that officers cannot live in the army, under present circumstances, whilst they see others enriching themselves by an infinity of ways. These are severe tests of public virtue, and should not in point of policy be pushed too far. With sincere regard and affection, and with compliments to Mrs. Reed, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK, 13th Dec., 1778.

SIR,

It has not been in my power to return an answer to your favor of the 6th Instt. till now. The letter met me on the road, separated from my papers; and I did not reach this place till late on the 11th, since which I have been much employed in attending to the disposition for hutting the army; but, in the mean time, the objects of the despatch have engaged my utmost consideration.

The earnest desire I have to pay the strictest compliance in every instance with the views and instructions of Congress, cannot but make me feel the greatest uneasiness, when I find myself in circum-

stances of hesitation or doubt with respect to their directions. But the perfect confidence I have in the justice and candor of that honble. body emboldens me to communicate without reserve the difficulties, which occur in the execution of their present order; and the indulgence I have experienced on every former occasion induces me to imagine, that the liberty I now take will not meet with disapprobation.

I have attentively taken up the report of the committee of the 5th, (approv'd by Congress,) on the subject of my letter of the 11th ulto., on the proposed expedition into Canada. I have considered it in several lights, and sincerely regret, that I should feel myself under any embarrassment in carrying it into execution. Still I remain of opinion, from a general review of things and the state of our resources, that no extensive system of coöperation with the French, for the complete emancipation of Canada, can be positively decided on for the ensuing year. To propose a plan of perfect coöperation with a foreign power, without a moral certainty in our supplies, and to have that plan actually ratified by the court of Versailles, might be attended, in case of failure in the conditions on our part, with very fatal effects.

If I should seem unwilling to transmit the plan as prepared by Congress, with my observations, it is because I find myself under a necessity, (in order to give our minister sufficient ground to found an application on,) to propose something more than a vague and indecisive plan, which, even in the event of a total evacuation of these States by the enemy, may

be rendered impracticable in the execution by a variety of insurmountable obstacles; or, if I retain my present sentiments and act consistently, I must point out the difficulties as they appear to me; which must embarrass his negotiations, and may disappoint the views of Congress.

But, proceeding on the idea of the enemy's leaving these States before the active part of the ensuing campaign, I should fear to hazard a mistake as to the precise aim and extent of the views of Congress. The line of conduct, that I am to observe in writing to our minister at the court of France, does not appear sufficiently deliniated. Were I to undertake it, I should be much afraid of erring through misconception. In this dilemma I would esteem it a particular favor to be excused from writing at all on the subject, especially as it is ye part of candor in me to acknowledge, that I do not see my way clear enough to point out such a plan for coöperation, as I conceive to be consistent with the ideas of Congress, and that will be sufficiently explanatory, with respect to time and circumstances, to give efficacy to the measure. But if Congress still think it necessary for me to proceed in the business, I must request their more definitive & explicit instructions, and that they will permit me, previous to transmitting the intended despatches, to submit them to their determination.

I could wish to lay before Congress more minutely the state of the army, the condition of our Supplies, and the requisites necessary for carrying into execution an undertaking that may involve the most serious

events. If Congress think this can be done more satisfactorily in a personal conference, I hope to have the army in such a situation before I can receive their answer, as to afford me an opportunity of giving my attendance. I would only add, that I shall cheerfully comply with the directions of Congress relative to making every preparation in our power for an Expedition against Niagara, and for such further operations to the northward, as time & circumstances shall enable us to carry on. Measures for the purpose have been taken in part for some time past; and I shall pursue them vigorously. The subject has long engaged my contemplation; and I am thoroughly convinced of the expediency & policy of doing every thing practicable on our part, for giving security to our Frontiers by the reduction of those places, which facilitate annoying them, and even for accomplishing the annexation of Canada to the Union.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] By the direction of Congress, in conformity to the above suggestion, General Washington left camp on the 22d of December, and repaired to Philadelphia for the purpose of holding a personal conference, respecting military affairs. The following were the proceedings of Congress on the occasion.

"The President informed Congress, that General Washington was arrived in town, pursuant to their orders. Whereupon resolved, that the Commander-in-chief be introduced to Congress, and informed from the chair, that Congress have directed his attendance in order, among other things, to confer with him on the operations of the next campaign, and that a committee will be appointed for that purpose.

"Ordered, that the Secretary present the Commander-in-chief with the foregoing resolution, and acquaint him that Congress are now ready to receive him.

"In pursuance of the foregoing order, the Commander-in-chief attended; and, being informed by the President of the end for which Congress had desired his attendance, and that a committee will be appointed agreeably to the foregoing resolution, he withdrew."—*Journals*, December 24th.

P. S. I have detained the letter to the Marquis till your further Instructions.[1] The waters have been so high, as to prevent the Express from setting out yesterday with this despatch, as was intended.[2]

TO LUND WASHINGTON.

HEAD QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
18 December, 1778.

DEAR LUND,

Your Letter of the 9th Instant came to my hands this day after I had despatched a long letter to you by Colo. Harrison—the quantity of land mentioned therein, as appears by my Plats, is I dare say, the exact number of acres held by Marshall; for more than which he ought not to expect payment—The three small quantities which serve to compose the aggregate 480½ are (I presume) those which lye on Muddy hole—the North side of the main road joining Wade's & my line & on the South joining Manley & me.—This, as it is by actual & careful measurement,

[1] The Marquis de Lafayette arrived in Boston on the 11th of December, preparatory to his embarkation for France, having been nearly six weeks on his way from Congress. He was detained on the road at Fishkill three weeks by extreme illness. Fatigue and exposure in travelling through a storm of rain on horseback had produced a fever, which for a time raged so violently that his life was despaired of. General Washington, whose head-quarters were a few miles from that place, was in a state of great anxiety, and by his personal visits and attentions exhibited proofs of his deep interest and warm attachment, which made a lasting impression upon his ardent young friend. Under the skilful treatment and constant attendance of Dr. Cochran, one of the principal physicians in the army, the disease took a favorable turn, and a natural vigor of constitution restored the patient, more speedily than could have been expected, to his accustomed health.—*Sparks.*

[2] Read in Congress December 17th. Referred to Laurens, M. Smith, G, Morris, S. Adams, and Burke.

[&] intended for my own satisfaction & government, does I am perswaded, contain to the utmost inch all that he holds, and I chearfully acquiesce to it as just —But at all events fix the matter with him by a resurvey, or any other way to close the bargain, telling him, however, that if it is resurveyed & the surveyor makes it less than 480½ I shall pay for no more than is found by the last survey (if it should even fall short of 400 acres) and unless you have conditioned to the contrary, I shall expect, as the Survey will be made to gratifie him, that it will be done at his expence, & by the Surveyor of the County—or at least a sworn surveyor.—You will see that the chain is full 33 feet in length.

With respect to the small slipes which he engaged to let me have, the matter taken up in a strict sense, may be determined in a moment, by only solving a single question—to wit—did he or did he not, agree to take 40/ an acre for the land in ye event of not getting Alexr.? If he did not the matter is at an end, because there is not in that case room for even the shadow of argument. If he did where is the hardship of it?—or in other words, why is it a *greater* hardship to receive money (short of one's wishes) for land sold, than for any other thing.—The money which General Weedon wants to pay you is due for lands I sold Doctor Mercer & for the very purpose of enabling me to pay for this and other Lands in that Neck as oppertunities might present; what difference then is there in the cases than in the Sum? and a case still more in point is—that the very money

advanced Alexander was in fact for the payment of this land of Marshall's. It is not harder than upon him to receive a part than upon me to receive the whole. Such local disadvantages as these are to be placed to the misfortunes of the times.—Some men indeed are benefited by them while others are ruined—I do not it is true come under the latter class (so far as extends to ruin) but I believe you know that by the comparitive worth of money, six or seven thousand pounds which I have in Bonds upon Interest is now reduced to as many hundreds because I can get no more for a thousand at this day than a hundred would have fetched when I left Virginia Bonds, debts, Rents &c undergoing no change while the currency is depreciating [low] in value and for ought I know may in a little time be totally sunk. I do not labor this point because I expect much from it, but simply to shew Mr. Marshall ye light in which he should consider the matter if he has a mind to act upon such principles as ought to actuate every honest man & to shew him moreover the falacy & error of his arguments when he endeavors to prove that I have deriv'd benefits from his Ld. which he has not experienced from Alexanders—the falacy of it—because if I have taken the timber off, it is not there consequently the land now is of much less value. The error of it—inasmuch as I am exceedingly mistaken if he has not inclosed and worked part of Alexander's Land—which (now I am upon the subject) is a matter that you ought to enquire into, as I have some recollection of Alexanders telling me, that he had not only put Marshall in

[&] intended for my own s
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that he holds, and I cheat
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...t reasonable that Mr. Triplet should remain
...ant of the land which he is to get in exchange
...by my mill race, as there is no prospect of my
...nome this Winter, and yet I am really at a loss
...out how it can be done without my being pres-
... no person knows the true & complex state of
...atter as well as I do—nevertheless if he desires
... will give you the best directions I can in order
...possession may be given him this Winter—the
...at I always expected & wished to have it done,
...o extend a line from the bridge, at the head of
...ace by the Tumbling Dam, to the little branch
...h you cross in going on ward to Morris's at the
... leading thither—thence by a direct line to the
...n road, as (if my memory serves me) my fence
...s; this, if the fence is removed in, as I think it
...s six or seven years ago, will give as many acres as
...shall get between the race & the line of my New
...atent.—but if it should not, then to pay for the
...ifference at whatever the land would sell for at the
...ime of ascertaining the several quantities we give and
take even if it should be at £50 an acre.—If Mr.
Triplet will agree to this, the matter, so far as respects
the land & the use of it to both of us may be settled
at any time; & a sum may also be deposited in his
hands to be adjusted hereafter; which will prevent
his suffering any delay or injustice on acct. of the
money he is to receive.—or if this will not do, from
his apprehension that he shall give more land than he
will get (in which I think he will be mistaken, if I am
not wrong in my ideas respecting the removal of my

Fence which was done in this very view) I would, in order to satisfie him, & bring the matter as far as possible to a close & without further delay let the line from the branch at the road (leading from the Tumbling dam to the Plantation as mentioned before) bare a little more to the right to include a little more land—a Measure of this kind must remove every difficulty & will certainly give content—the legal fees of the County Surveyor in ascertaining this work, would amount to the value of both pieces of land; for not knowing, or not depending upon the circumstances, or with a view perhaps to increase his fees, he would survey Harrison's Patent (on which Mr. Triplet lives) Pearsons (the Patentee of which I do not now recollect) my land taken up as waste—& part perhaps of that I bought of Geo. Ashford—all of which may be avoided by the mode I speak of, and the disadvantage resulting from the want of a final settlement thrown upon me, by giving him more land and more money, than he will be entitled to upon a fair and impartial measurement of the exchanged tracts. If you and Mr. Triplet should agree without any thing have a stone, or a locust Post fixed at the Road for the Corner.—

With respect to your bargain with Lanphire I can say nothing. I wish every contract that I make or that is made for me should be fulfilled according to the strict & equitable meaning of the Parties—& this in the present case, you must be a better judge of than I—If at the time of engaging him, the extra allowance of Corn &ca. more was expected & prom-

ised than has been performed, you are certainly under no obligation to comply with your part till he has fulfilled his—if on the other hand, he has fulfilled his you are bound to comply altho' it may prove hard. but from your state of the case, the true and equitable construction of the bargain seems to me to be, that he ought to have the Corn and Wool, but should be obliged to continue his & servant's labor at their present wages till the covered ways and such works as was particularized or had in contemplation at the time is finished—without this his wages will be monstrous, the end not answered & what neither of you at the time could possibly have in view.—I therefore think that this is the proper footing to place it on, &, tho' slow, he had better be kept on those terms till you can at least bring his wages within the bounds of moderation by time if he should not quite compleat the work expected of him.—The Corn (which I am told Qr. Master Finie is now giving six pounds pr. barrl. for) should be delivered by little at a time, for if he gets the whole at once you may I suppose, catch him as you can.—

I come now to mention a matter which more particularly respects yourself—The depreciation of money, & the sudden rise in the price in ye course of this year & other things principally to this cause owing rendered your present wages especially under short Crops totally inadequate to your trouble & services.—I am therefore willing that you should receive a certain part of the last Crop—to be disposed of by you for your own benefit and so in future—this

stances of hesitation or doubt with respect to their directions. But the perfect confidence I have in the justice and candor of that honble. body emboldens me to communicate without reserve the difficulties, which occur in the execution of their present order; and the indulgence I have experienced on every former occasion induces me to imagine, that the liberty I now take will not meet with disapprobation.

I have attentively taken up the report of the committee of the 5th, (approv'd by Congress,) on the subject of my letter of the 11th ulto., on the proposed expedition into Canada. I have considered it in several lights, and sincerely regret, that I should feel myself under any embarrassment in carrying it into execution. Still I remain of opinion, from a general review of things and the state of our resources, that no extensive system of coöperation with the French, for the complete emancipation of Canada, can be positively decided on for the ensuing year. To propose a plan of perfect coöperation with a foreign power, without a moral certainty in our supplies, and to have that plan actually ratified by the court of Versailles, might be attended, in case of failure in the conditions on our part, with very fatal effects.

If I should seem unwilling to transmit the plan as prepared by Congress, with my observations, it is because I find myself under a necessity, (in order to give our minister sufficient ground to found an application on,) to propose something more than a vague and indecisive plan, which, even in the event of a total evacuation of these States by the enemy, may

be rendered impracticable in the execution by a variety of insurmountable obstacles; or, if I retain my present sentiments and act consistently, I must point out the difficulties as they appear to me; which must embarrass his negotiations, and may disappoint the views of Congress.

But, proceeding on the idea of the enemy's leaving these States before the active part of the ensuing campaign, I should fear to hazard a mistake as to the precise aim and extent of the views of Congress. The line of conduct, that I am to observe in writing to our minister at the court of France, does not appear sufficiently deliniated. Were I to undertake it, I should be much afraid of erring through misconception. In this dilemma I would esteem it a particular favor to be excused from writing at all on the subject, especially as it is ye part of candor in me to acknowledge, that I do not see my way clear enough to point out such a plan for coöperation, as I conceive to be consistent with the ideas of Congress, and that will be sufficiently explanatory, with respect to time and circumstances, to give efficacy to the measure. But if Congress still think it necessary for me to proceed in the business, I must request their more definitive & explicit instructions, and that they will permit me, previous to transmitting the intended despatches, to submit them to their determination.

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spirited exertions of her Sons than at this period; and if it is not a sufficient cause for genl. lamentation, my misconception of the matter impresses it too strongly upon me, that the States, separately, are too much engaged in their local concerns, and have too many of their ablest men withdrawn from the general council, for the good of the common weal. In a word, I think our political system may be compared to the mechanism of a clock, and that our conduct should derive a lesson from it; for it answers no good purpose to keep the smaller wheels in order, if the greater one, which is the support and prime mover of the whole, is neglected.

How far the latter is the case, it does not become me to pronounce; but, as there can be no harm in a pious wish for the good of one's Country, I shall offer it as mine, that each State wd. not only choose, but absolutely compel their ablest men to attend Congress; and that they would instruct them to go into a thorough investigation of the causes, that have produced so many disagreeable effects in the army and Country; in a word, that public abuses shoud be corrected & an entire reformation worked. Without these, it does not in my Judgment require the spirit of divination to foretell the consequences of the present administration; nor to how little purpose the States individually are framing constitutions, providing laws, and filling offices with the abilities of their ablest men. These, if the great whole is mismanaged, must sink in the general wreck, and will carry with it the remorse of thinking, that we are lost by our own folly

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tous concerns of an empire—a great and accumulated debt—ruined finances—depreciated money—and want of credit (which in their consequences is the want of everything) are but secondary considerations and postponed from day to day—from week to week as if our affairs wear the most promising aspect—after drawing this picture, which from my Soul I believe to be a true one, I need not repeat to you that I am alarmed and wish to see my Countrymen roused.—I have no resentments, nor do I mean to point at any particular characters,—this I can declare upon my honor for I have every attention paid me by Congress that I can possibly expect and have reason to think that I stand well in their estimation, but in the present situation of things I cannot help asking—Where is Mason—Wythe—Jefferson—Nicholas—Pendleton—Nelson—and another I could name—and why, if you are sufficiently impressed with your danger do you not (as New Yk. has done in the case of Mr. Jay) send an extra member or two for at least a certain limited time till the great business of the Nation is put upon a more respectable and happy establishmt.—Your Money is now sinking 5 pr. ct. a day in this city; and I shall not be surprized if in the course of a few months a total stop is put to the currency of it.—And yet an Assembly—a concert—a Dinner—or supper (that will cost three or four hundred pounds) will not only take Men off from acting in but even from thinking of this business while a great part of the Officers of ye Army from absolute necessity are quitting the service and ye more virtuous few rather

than do this are sinking by sure degrees into beggary and want.—I again repeat to you that this is not an exaggerated acct.; that it is an alarming one I do not deny, and confess to you that I feel more real distress on acct. of the prest. appearances of things than I have done at any one time since the commencement of the dispute—but it is time to bid you once more adieu.—Providence has heretofore taken me up when all other means and hope seemed to be departing from me in this. I will confide.—Yours—&c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
18 December, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

1. I beg you will accept my thanks for your obliging letter of the 30th ulto. and the polite expressions of your friendship which accompany it. At the same time I am happy to congratulate you on your honorable acquittal with the approbation of Congress.[1] 2. The information and remarks you have favored me with are very full and satisfactory, and I must request, as you are good enough to promise, that you will continue your reflections and inquiries on the subject, and communicate from time to time the result.

[1] The charge against General Schuyler was *neglect of duty*, in not being present at Ticonderoga, when it was evacuated by General St. Clair. The entire proceedings of the northernc ampaign of 1777, while General Schuyler had the command, were investigated by the court-martial at his request. He submitted in detail his letters, instructions, and orders. He was unanimously acquitted by the court "with the highest honor," and this acquittal was confirmed by Congress.—*Journals*, December 3d.

3. The difference of circumstances, which you have enumerated, between the time of General Amherst's operations and the present, is certainly very striking, and the difficulties of an expedition into Canada by the route he took, as things are now situated, great and many. The more, however, I consider the subject, and examine into the state of our resources, the more I am convinced, that if an expedition is carried into that country, in the course of the next Campaign, it must of necessity be done through that channel. The advantages of penetrating by Lake Champlain make the practicability of doing it infinitely desirable; but, upon the whole, I still am of opinion, that the prospect of effecting it is too small and precarious to warrant the attempt. I could hardly rely upon the success of any expedient, that might be adopted to gain the superiority of the Lake in the Summer. And I have greater reason, than when I had the pleasure of writing you the 20th ulto., to believe that an undertaking for that purpose this winter is entirely out of our power. My earnest desire of a Winter expedition has led me closely to investigate our means of prosecuting it; and I find, after the fullest examination, from the concurrent and definitive reports of the Quarter Master and Commissary-General, that our resources are unequal to the preparations necessary for such an enterprise.

4. How far it will be in our power to extend our operations into Canada the next campaign, must depend on a variety of events, which cannot now be foreseen with certainty. It is to be lamented, too, that our

prospects are not so favorable as we could wish. But I agree with you in the importance of reducing Niagara, at least, if practicable; and I think it prudent to be taking preparatory measures to enable us to attempt this, and as much more as the future situation of our affairs and resources may permit. I am the more induced to this, as the emancipation of Canada is an object that Congress have much at heart. 5. Conformably to this principle, I have directed the Commissary-General to lay in as large magazines of flour and salt provisions &c. at Albany and any other places, which may be thought proper, as he possibly can; and, in like manner, I have instructed the Quarter-Master-General to provide all the materials requisite for building vessels, together with forage and every other article, which comes under the direction of his department. A copy of my instructions to him is enclosed.

6. You will perceive I have referred the Quarter-Master-General to you for advice and directions in making his arrangements. I have done the same with respect to the Commissary. Every consideration induces me to wish and request your assistance in this business. No person, I know, has it more in his power to judge of the measures proper to be taken; and I am persuaded you will readily afford your aid in a matter of so great importance, as far as may be consistent with the situation of your public and personal concerns.

7. In forming the magazines, I wish regard to be had as far as the primary intention will permit to an

easy transfer and appropriation of them, to the use of the army in this quarter, lest our operations to the Northward should be disappointed, and the scene of action still continue in our present front.—As a large supply of hard bread will be essential, you will, please among other things to direct the Commissary, to provide such a quantity of this article as you deem sufficient. The most speedy and complete repair possible of the arms in the hands of Mr. Renselaar will require immediate attention. 8. Though we cannot now determine what will be the extent of our northern plan, nor consequently what number of troops will really be employed, yet, as it is necessary to fix some precise idea on this point, by which to regulate our preparations, you will adapt them to an army of at least ten thousand *effective* rank and file, with a proportion of Artillery-men, attendants, and retainers of every kind, according to the nature of the expedition.

9. On account of the difficulty you suggest in transporting the vessels from the place mentioned in my last, my present intention is to have the iron work rigging Sails &c. prepared at Albany, and the vessels built at Oswego, agreeable to the plan you propose.—10. unless upon a more full considn. of ye matter you shall think the former plan of building on Hudsons River can be executed in the whole or part with more ease than at first view.

11. It would be of the greatest moment, however, to employ every artifice to cover the real design, and beget false expectations in the enemy. I leave this to your management.

12. You will observe by my instructions to the Qr. Mr. Gl., that I have not absolutely decided on the kind of vessels to be constructed. I wish first to take the opinions of some persons of experience in maritime affairs before I finally determine. With respect to the batteaux I leave the construction of them wholly to your judgment and you will give every direction accordingly.[1]

13. I shall be under a particular obligation for the journals you mention, if you are fortunate enough to find them.

14. Before I conclude There is one or two things, in particular, which I must beg you will endeavor to

[1] "In a letter, which I had the pleasure of writing you the 18th Inst, I requested you to take the direction of the magazines, &c., that were to be prepared towards a certain expedition. I should have extended the idea to your taking the full command in the northern department; but I was restrained by a doubt how far the measure might be agreeable to your own views and intentions. The same doubt still remains; but as it is very much my desire you should resume that command, I take occasion to signify it to you. At the same time, if you have any material objections against it, I would not wish to preclude their operation. If you have not, you will be pleased to consider this as an order for the purpose. As you are fully acquainted with all the objects of the command, it is unnecessary to enter into a detail of particular instructions." —*Washington to Major-General Schuyler*, 31 December, 1778.

"Since my arrival in this City, to which I was called by Congress to confer with them on matters relative to our future operations, several circumstances have, in the course of our inquiries and deliberations, convinced us of the absolute necessity of contracting our system. It has therefore been determined to lay the Niagara expedition entirely aside for the present, and content ourselves with some operations on a smaller scale against the savages, and those people who have infested our frontier the preceding campaign. I shall, when I am somewhat more at leisure, take an opportunity of informg. you more fully of the causes of this alteration of measures.

"I was exceedingly sorry to be made acquainted with your determination to resign your command in the army. I can say with truth, that I should have been happy to derive that assistance from you, in your military Capacity, which I shall always take the liberty of asking, as from my private friend and a friend to his country. I had pleased myself with hopes of seeing you in Albany

ascertain—Whether, there is not another River below la famine which empties into the St. Lawrence, and what kind of a River it is?—I have an idea of one which enters as low as Oswegatchie.—Also where the enemy's vessels on Lake Ontario are stationed during the Winter, and how they are defended and secured in the frozen state of the Lake?

15. It is not unlikely I may be at Albany in the Month of January. This, in the mean time, I desire to be known only to you; but I must insist, that you will not suffer it to make the least alteration in your private plans. I am, with the truest esteem and regard, dear Sir, your obedient humble servant.

some time this winter; but I shall be detained here so much longer than I expected, that I have given up all thoughts of that kind. . . . It will for these reasons be necessary for you to put an immediate stop to all the preparations for that purpose more particularly pointed out in my letter of the 18th Decemr. (which inclosed you a Copy of the instructions given to the Qr. Mr. Gl.) except such as may be usefully employed in the prosecution of our Indian expedition. General Greene will refer Colo. Lewis to you for his line of conduct in this matter, and when you give him his directions you may assign him such reasons for this sudden change as shall seem to you most prudent and plausible."—*Washington to Major-General Schuyler*, 18 January, 1779.

In Schuyler's letter of November 30th, he had proposed an attack by Indians upon the British shipping on Lake Ontario. To this Washington replied: "I had in contemplation another scheme indeed while I entertained hopes of pushing matters to the northward or westward the ensuing campaign. I was partly resolved upon it (if upon a sufficient investigation of the subject, and the state of Lake Champlain would admit of it,) it should be found practicable. It was to attempt by surprise, and the rapid movement of a few troops in sleighs, the destruction of the vessels at St. Johns. The force in that quarter stands thus: Point-au-fer, an officer's command; at the Isle de Noix, the 29th. Regiment; St. Johns and Chamblee, the 31st Regiment. If the posts advanced of the shipping could be passed in the night, I should have no doubt of success in the enterprise, nor of safety in the retreat; for secrecy in the undertaking, and celerity in the execution must mark our conduct, whilst consternation and incapacity (even if they had ability) would follow on that of the enemy as the whole would be the work of a moment. I do but drop the hint."—25 January, 1779.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS APPOINTED TO CONFER WITH THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

PHILADELPHIA, 11th Jany., 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

I have perused the letter, which you did me the honor to write, containing several subjects of consideration referred by Congress to the committee of conference, and on which you desire my opinion.[1] As

[1] Washington had on the 8th laid before the committee "a few imperfect minutes of those heads which will require your attention." These minutes and his running comments, were:

1st. The first & great object is to recruit the Army.

By Inlisting all the men now in it during the War, who are engaged for any term short of it; for this purpose no bounty shd. be spared.

By drafting, upon some such plan as was recommended (by me) to the Committee at Valley forge last February.

2d. The next object is to.—

Fix some Ideas respecting the Northern preparations—concerning which the Commander-in-chief now finds himself in a delemma—and respecting the operations of the next campaign in general—in order that measures may be taken systematically.

The following questions on which the foregoing will depend, ought to be considered & decided.—

1st. If the enemy retain their present force at New York and Rhode Island can we assemble a sufficient force, & means, to expel them?

2d. If we cannot, can we make a successful attempt against Niagara & keep a sufficient force at the same time on the Sea board, to keep them within their present Posts?

3d. Are our Finances equal to eventual preparations for both these objects?—

If the first is determined in the affirmative & the enemy keep possession, we ought to direct almost our whole force and exertions to that point; and for the security of our Frontiers endeavor to make some Expedition against Detroit & the Indian settlement, by way of diversion.—Our preparations ought then to be adapted to this plan; & if we cannot conveniently unite our preparations for this object with an Expedition against Niagara, we ought to renounce the latter.—

If the first question is answered negatively, and the second affirmatively—and it is judged expedient to make such an attempt—our preparations ought to have reference principally thereto, and we must consent ourselves with a merely defensive conduct elsewhere and should study œconomy as much as possible;

I am not yet furnished with sufficient data relative to the first head, it will be necessary to defer touching upon it until I can by the means of the board of war inform myself more fully of the object of the expedi-

—It is in vain to attempt things which are more the objects of desire than attainment.—Every undertaking must be, at least ought to be, regulated by the state of our Finances.—the prospect of our supplies—and the probability of success; without this disappointment, disgrace, & increase of debt will follow on our part—exultation & renewed hope, on that of the enemy.—To determine therefore what we can undertake—the state of the Army—the prospect of recruiting it—paying—clothing—& feeding it.—The providing the necessary apparatus for offensive operations.—All these matters ought to be well & maturely considered. On them every thing must depend and however reluctantly we yield, they will compel us to conform to them; or by attempting impossibilities we shall ruin our affairs.

From the investigation of these points another question may possibly result, —viz:—

Will not the situation of our affairs on account of the depreciated condition of our money—deficiency of Bread—scarcity of Forage—the exhausted state of our resources in the middle department, and the general distress of the Inhabitants render it advisable for the main body of the Army to lye quiet in some favorable position for confining (as much as possible) the enemy to their presents Posts (adopting at the same time the best means in our power to scourge the Indians & prevent their depredations) in order to save expenses—avoid new Emissions—recruit our finances,—and give a proper tone to our Money for more vigorous measures hereafter.

If the third question is answered affirmatively which it is much to be feared cannot be done—then eventual preparations ought to be made for both.—We shall then be best able to act according to future circumstances; for though it will be impossible to unite both objects in the execution; yet in the event of the enemy's leaving these States—we should be ready to strike an important blow, for the effectual security of our Frontiers and for opening a door for a further progress into Canada.

3d. In determining a plan of operations for next Campaign much will depend on the prospect of European affairs—what we have to expect from our friends, —what they will expect from us—and what the enemy will probably be able to do—These points should be well weighed & every information concentred to throw light upon them.—But upon the whole it will be the safest & most prudent way—to suppose the worst & prepare for it.—

4th. It is scarcely necessary to observe that the providing ample supplies of Arms—Clothes—and Ordnance Stores is essential; and that an uncertain dependence on them may be not only hurtful but ruinous.—Their importance

tion, the orders or instructions given to General McIntosh, and some other fundamental points.

I pass therefore to that, which regards the Commissary of Prisoners. His Letter to Congress evi-

demands that every expedient should be without delay adopted towards obtaining these Articles in due season for the purposes of next Campaign.

Heavy Cannon for the Posts in the Highlands, for Battering—and for Vessels if offensive measures are to be pursued must be immediately provided & in considerable quantity—with a sufficient Apparatus will also be wanted.

5th. The completing the arrangement of the Army without further delay is a matter of great importance whatever may be our plan—the want of this is a source of infinite dissatisfaction to the Officers in general & continual perplexity to the Commandr. in chief.

The want of Brigadiers is a Material inconvenience—& has been the cause of much relaxation of discipline & discontent, and loss in several instances.

6th. The Ordnance department seems to require some important alterations. Generl. Knox's representation transmitted to Congress in July or August last—and his Letter and memorial of the — Ulto. copy of wch. is annexed, show that he finds himself under embarrassment of a very disagreeable nature from the present form of it.—

7th. The Clothing department appears to be altogether unsettled & confused—and requires immediate attention for the purposes both of regular Issues to the Army and of saving to the Public. There are too many persons concerned in that business, & acting independently of each other, to have it well conducted.—The Army is now exceedingly deficient in the articles of Blankets & Hats; & soon will be of Shoes as the call for them is incessant,—They might I should conceive be contracted for, by means of the Hides wch. we have in abundance.—

8th. The Hospital is, in some respects, in my judgment upon an improper establishment, & might be altered for the better; I mean that part of it which appoints sub-directors, surgeons, &ca., for different districts which necessarily must be attended with one or the other of these two evils—either that a competent number must be appointed in each district to serve the purposes of the whole Army (in case the theatre of War should happen to be there), which must be a great unnecessary burthen to the Public.—Or, these Gentlemen must be occasionally removed from one district to another which is productive of an interference of authority—jealousies & disputes very injurious to the service.

It appears to me, that there is no occasion for allotting those departments which are under one general Director into districts.—'T is true, that wherever there are Troops, there must be Surgeons and Hospital stores, but these can be sent by the Director General as Exigencies require and proportioned to the

dently proves the necessity of prescribing a proper line of conduct to him, which in my opinion will be sufficiently pointed out in the following instructions, vizt., To reside at the Head-Quarters of the Army; To make no Exchanges but such as are

demand; Whereas by being made stationary they become inadequate to the duty in one case, and sinecures in the other.—From the beginning of the War there has been a constant disagreement between the Hospital & Regimental Surgeons, in which, more than probably both have been wrong; but I cannot help thinking if a little more latitude were granted to the Regimental Surgeons under the Inspection of the Director General—or rather Surgeon Genl. of the flying Hospital that great good would result from it.—As far as I can judge much expense has been incurred—many lives have been lost—and many desertions occasioned by removing men from Camp which the means of taking care of them in their Regiments might have prevented.—It often happens that the seeds of dangerous disorders are sown by removing the sick at improper times & in unfavorable weather which might be avoided by keeping them in Camp, if they could have the necessary assistance there, but which under the present arrangement are unavoidable.—

9th. The immediate Establishment of the Inspectorship on some definitive plan, that the benefit of it may be fully derived towards the next Campaign is a matter of the utmost importance.

10th. It is also very interesting that the Engineering department should be arranged upon some fixed & explicit footing.

11th. The Situation of the Officers of the Army, (under the present depreciated state of the Paper curry. & consequent high prices of every necessary) is so singularly hard that the bare mention of their case is sufficient to bring it home to the attention & feelings of every man of reflection and will leave him no doubt of the necessity of applying a remedy the most speedy and effectual.

In reference to this paper, the committee wrote on the 9th of January: "In order to give despatch to the several matters mentioned in your Excellency's report to the committee, it is proposed to offer resolutions to Congress on the heads you enumerate. We wish that the remedy may be effectual, and think it happy that we can be favored by your assistance. We therefore request that you will be pleased to point out what ought to be done, with respect to the arrangement of the army, the department of artillery and ordnance, the clothing department, the inspectorship, and the branch of engineers. Indeed, we think it would be advisable to vest the Commander-in-chief with the power to make these and every other arrangement for the good government of the army, by forming a complete system to be adopted by Congress as their act. We submit this last suggestion to your Excellency's consideration being unwilling to throw any burden upon you which may be disagreeable."

directed by the Congress, the board of War, or the Commander-in-chief, (the directions of the two former to pass through the hands of the latter;) and, whenever he has occasion to send a Flag into the Enemy's Lines with Provisions for prisoners, or any other business, to make application to the Commander-in-chief, who will judge of the cause and the propriety in point of time. The exclusive privilege, which Mr. Beatty seems to require, of regulating the intercourse by Flag, both with regard to the object and the time of sending them, astonishes me. It would give him powers, which no Commissary of Prisoners has ever yet been vested with. They must be dangerous, and certainly are unnecessary, as the Commissary can have no business in the course of his office, with which the Commander-in-chief ought to be unacquainted.—

In order to preserve harmony and correspondence in the System of the Army, there must be a controlling power, to which the several Departments are to refer. If any department is suffered to act independently of the officer commanding, collision of orders and confusion of affairs will be the inevitable consequence. This induces me to repeat, that all orders from Congress or the board of War to any department or officer should be communicated thro' the Commander-in-chief, or, in the case of a separate Command, thro' the Commandant.[1]

It was absolutely necessary, that the open and free intercourse with New York, which I found prevailing

[1] The above suggestions, respecting the commissary of prisoners, and the several departments of the army, were confirmed by a resolve of Congress.—*Journals*, January 23d.

on my arrival at Elizabeth Town, the 1st of December, should be restrained; and I gave positive orders to General Maxwell to suffer no persons to pass, unless permission should be previously obtained from the Governors of the respective States, or myself; and I requested Governors Livingston and Reed to fix on the 1st day of every month for this purpose, to which they readily acceded.

12*th*.—Since writing as above, I have endeavored to gain every information relative to the Western Expedition, but have not been able to arrive at such a knowledge of the State of Affairs in that quarter, and the present views of the Commanding officer, as are essential to founding an explicit opinion. The object of the expedition was to give peace and security to our frontiers, by expelling the Indians and destroying their principal point of Support. In prosecuting a Plan for this purpose, much expense has already been incurred, and the end is not yet obtained. Neither is it in my power to determine, from any thing that has been communicated to me, in what train the operations are. But it appears to me, that, previous to renouncing the expedition, the Commanding officer should be consulted—and that a sudden Abandonment of the Undertaking would occasion not only the sinking of the whole expense, without reaping any benefit, but likewise on the other hand, give confidence to our enemies, and expose us to more frequent and destructive inroads.

By General McIntosh's Letters to the Board of War, &c., it appears, evidently, that he has been dis-

appointed in his expectation of men, provisions, and Stores.[1] His orders seem to have been precise, his anxiety great; and, tho' he may not have advanced agreeably to his own expectation and the views of Congress, yet, as a certain progress has been made, as the causes which gave rise to the expedition still exist, and Security to our Frontiers is not to be obtained by a defensive Plan, my Sentiments with respect to his future conduct, from the light in which I view the matter, are these. That General McIntosh should, (if he has not already done so,) decide finally, whether, with his present force, provisions, stores, prospect of supplies, and means of transportation, he can advance to Detroit, and whether the advantages or disadvantages of a Winter Expedition preponderate. If these should be determined in the affirmative, his plan should be prosecuted with vigor; if in the negative, the militia should be discharged,—every useless mouth dismissed, and the Winter spent in forming magazines, building batteaux, or such Canoes as can be transported into Lake Erie, by the way of Scioto or le bœuf, and will serve to coast it in when there. A time and place should be appointed for rendezvous, in the spring, of such farther force as shall be judged necessary for the operations of the Campaign, and

[1] "From a late letter of Gen'l McIntosh to myself, and several of the Board of War, I find that he has been so much distressed for provision, that he has been obliged suddenly to disband all the militia that were in service, and seems to be very apprehensive that he shall with difficulty subsist the two Continental Regiments and a few Independent companies thro' the winter."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 30 January, 1779. The Commissary General of Purchases claimed that the Western department was not under his direction.

effectual measures should be taken in the mean time to secure such force. I do not conceive, that more pointed directions than these can be given at this time, unless General McIntosh's Situation and Views were better understood. My Ideas of contending with the Indians have been uniformly the same; and I am clear in opinion, that the most economical (tho' this may also be attended with great expense) as well as the most effectual mode of opposing them, where they can make incursions upon us, is to carry the war into their own Country. For, supported on the one hand by the british, and enriching themselves with the spoils of our people, they have every thing to gain and nothing to lose, while we act on the defensive; whereas the direct reverse would be the consequence of an offensive war on our part.

The Western Expedition, upon the present Plan, stands unconnected with any other; consequently General McIntosh looked only to one object, and doubtless pursued the Route, which, in his judgment, led most easily to it; but, considering that his operations and those of the northward might have a correspondence, if his are delayed till the Spring, they might be varied so as to answer his object as well, if not better, and they would at the same time favor the other expedition. The Establishing of Posts of Communication, which the General has done for the Security of his convoys and Army in case of accident, is a proceeding grounded on military practice and Experience. These works do not appear to have occasioned any additional expense. I am, &c.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

PHILADELPHIA, 13th January, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

The minutes I had the honor of submitting to the consideration of the Committee, were intended as the Basis of a conference on the several points therein contained, in order that, after an interchange of Ideas and information, to be the better able to form a just judgment of the System of conduct and measures, which it will be proper for us to pursue. It is essential to consider the subject in several points of light, in which, for want of information, I feel myself greatly at a loss. The question does not turn upon military principles only. The State of European politics, and our own prospect of Finance and Supplies of every kind, are essential to a right determination. My situation has not put it in my power to be as fully acquainted with these, as I could wish; and, so far as they are concerned, my reasoning must be imperfect. Yet, as the Committee express a desire to have my Ideas more explicitly on the objects proposed to them, I shall endeavor to comply with their expectations in the best manner I can, under my present disadvantages, confining myself principally to a view of our own internal circumstances and prospects.

The first object to which I took the liberty to call their attention was the recruiting of the Army, towards which two modes were suggested: 1st, to enlist all the men now in it during the War, who are engaged for any term short of that, and to spare no Bounty for that purpose; 2d, to draft upon some plan

similar to the one recommended to the Committee at Valley Forge last February.

Whether it will be necessary to adopt one or both of these expedients, will depend on what shall be determined respecting the plan of operation for next campaign. If the general principle of it be offensive, we must unite the two ; if defensive, the first may answer. I said in that case no Bounty ought to be spared ; but when I reflect upon the enormous State Bounties already given, I can hardly advise an addition to the Continental one, nor am I clear whether it would have the effect intended. If all State Bounties in money could be abolished, from the inequality, interference, and competition of which I am persuaded the recruiting Service has greatly suffered, I should recommend the Continental Bounty to be raised as high as a hundred and fifty dollars, or perhaps higher, and that this should be extended to recruiting in the Country as well as in the army. The expenses on this plan would be less, and the success I believe greater. Adequate provision should also be made for the officers employed in the recruiting Service.

In reasoning upon a plan of operations for the next Campaign, we ought, in my opinion, to suppose that the enemy will hold their present posts. Many strong arguments may be adduced for and against it ; and in the present state of our information from Europe, so far as it has come to my knowledge, I do not think we have any sufficient Ground to conclude they will leave us. It is safest to suppose they will not, and to prepare for it. For if they do, though we may

not be able immediately to make full advantage of their departure, for want of having turned our preparations into a right channel, yet this will be only an inconvenience. On the other hand, if we were to take our measures on the presumption of an evacuation, and this should not happen, we might be ruined by the mistake. One is a question of convenience, the other of safety.

On the supposition of a continuance of the War in America, in its present form, there are three points of view in which the conduct proper to be observed by us may be considered: one, the endeavoring to expel the enemy from their present posts in our front, and directing our whole effort to that object; another, the making an expedition against Niagara, to give effectual security to our Frontier and open a door into Canada, and remaining upon the defensive in this quarter; the third, the remaining entirely on the defensive, except such smaller operations against the Indians, as will be absolutely necessary to divert their depredations from us. The first is the most desirable; because, if it could succeed, it would be decisive, and put us out of the reach of contingencies;—The inquiry is, how far it may be practicable.

The enemy's force at New York and Rhode Island, independent of the aid they might on any pressing exigency draw from the Refugees and Militia of the places in their possession, induced partly by inclination and partly by compulsion, may be estimated at about twelve or thirteen thousand effective men. Though this force is now divided, it can be so easily assembled,

that, in operating against it in one part, we must expect to meet with the united opposition of the whole. Our force ought therefore to be sufficient to carry our point against the whole,—Double the number is the least it could be undertaken with, and this would be far from giving a certainty of success. The insular situation of the Enemy's posts, assisted by strong Fortifications and by their shipping, would be obstacles not easily to be overcome.

According to this estimate, the smallest number with which the attempt could be undertaken, would be 26,000 effective men. If I am not mistaken, this is a larger number than we have ever had in the Field; and besides these, we should be still necessitated to keep Bodies of Troops on the Frontier and at other posts. This is a force, which, it is much to be feared we should find it very difficult if not impossible to raise. Our resources of men, I believe, rather decrease. There is abundant employment in every Branch of Business;—Wages, in consequence, have become so high, and the Value of our money so low, that little temptation is left to men to engage in the Army. We have tried the effect of drafting, and cannot expect more success than last year; so that, upon the whole, it is probable our force, after every exertion, would be rather less than more than it was in the preceding campaign; and if it should even be equal, it would be considerably short of what is required.

But if the men were to be had, a question arises, whether they could be subsisted. The difficulty and expense would be excessive, and it is much to be

doubted, whether our money, tho' aided by every exertion of Government, would be able to bring out the Resources of the Country to answer so immense a demand. Indeed, I am not altogether clear that the Resources of the Country are in themselves equal to it. There is at this time an alarming scarcity of Bread and Forage; and, tho' it may be in a great measure artificial, yet there are symptoms of its being in some degree real. The great impediment to all vigorous measures is the state of our Currency. What prospects there are of relieving it, what is to be expected from the measures taken to that effect, the committee, to whom the subject is familiar, and best understood, will judge. But I fear their operation will be too slow to answer the purpose of the next Campaign; and if the vast expenditures necessary to the plan under consideration were to be made, I should have little hope of the success of any projects for appreciating the Currency that can be adopted.

One powerful objection to the undertaking is, that, if we fail in it, after straining all the Faculties of the State to the highest pitch, a total relaxation and debility might ensue, from which perhaps we should not be able to recover. But though I should be extremely doubtful of our ability to force the enemy from both their present posts, and very apprehensive of the consequences of an ineffectual attempt,—Yet I should think it might not be impracticable to oblige them to abandon one, that is, Rhode Island, and collect their whole force at the other. The manner of doing this would be by an attack upon New York,

so as to force the Garrison of Rhode Island to come to its succor.—but to effect this, would require the exertion of our whole strength, and perhaps the object may not be thought adequate to the exertion.

The next plan suggested is to make an Expedition against Niagara, and remain upon the defensive here. This would not require so many men as the other, but it would be more expensive. Not less than a force equal to that of the Enemy could with propriety be left here, say thirteen thousand. In estimating the force requisite against Niagara, we must provide for establishing posts of communication as we advance, to protect our Convoys and secure a Retreat in case of disaster. We must also lay our account in having to do with the whole force of the Garrison of Detroit and Niagara, reinforced by all the Indians and other Banditti, who have hitherto infested our Frontiers; and we must even go further, and look towards a reinforcement from Canada. On a suspicion of our intention against Niagara, a part of the troops from Canada would naturally be sent to the aid of that important Fortress. The number, then, necessary for this expedition, to give a moral certainty of success, cannot be less than seven or eight thousand men. This will make 20 or 21,000 requisite for the execution of the Second plan. In addition to these, an extraordinary number of artificers, and a number of sailors and batteaux-men, will be wanted, over and above the ordinary attendants of an army. These must be included in the general estimate of numbers and Expense. The building and equipping of Ships

and Boats, and providing of other Apparatus peculiar to an expedition of this nature, will be an immense addition to the article of Expense. The difficulty and consequently expense of supplies of every kind will be greater, than in the operations to which we have been accustomed, on account of the remoteness of the scene of action from the source of supplies, and from the nature of the Country thro' which they are to be transported. Considering these things, which I have more fully delineated in my letter to Congress on the Canadian expedition, it will appear pretty evident, that the expense of the second plan under consideration will be greater than that of the first. Most of the objections, that militate against the other, apply to this. The object is certainly less; and it will not perhaps be thought sound policy to exhaust our strength and resources in distant and indecisive expeditions, while there is still a possibility of our having a call for our utmost efforts for the interior defence and absolute safety of these States.

It is much to be regretted, that our prospect of any capital offensive operations is so slender, that we seem in a manner to be driven to the necessity of adopting the third plan, that is, remaining intirely on the defensive; except such lesser operations against the Indians, as are absolutely necessary to divert their ravages from us. The advantages of this plan are these. It will afford an opportunity of retrenching our Expenses and of adopting a general system of Economy, which may give success to the plans of Finance Congress have in contemplation, and perhaps

enable them to do something effectual for the relief of public Credit, and for restoring the Value of our Currency. It will also give some repose to the Country in general, and, by leaving a greater number of hands to cultivate the lands, remove the apprehension of a scarcity of supplies.

If this plan is determined upon, every measure of Government ought to correspond. The most uniform principle of Economy should pervade every department. [We should not be frugal in one part and prodigal in another.] We should contract, but we should consolidate our System. The army, tho' small, should be of a firm and permanent texture. Every thing possible should be done to make the situation of the Officers and Soldiery comfortable, and every inducement offered to engage men during the War. The most effectual plan that can be devised for enlisting those already in the Army, and recruiting in the Country, ought to be carried into immediate execution.

I shall not enter particularly into the measures that may be taken against the Indians, but content myself with the general idea thrown out, unless it should be the pleasure of the Committee that I should be more explicit. The main Body of the army must take a position so as to be most easily subsisted, and at the same time best situated to restrain the Enemy from ravaging the Country. If they should hereafter weaken themselves still more, so as to give a favorable opening, we should endeavor to improve it.

This plan may perhaps have some serious disad-

vantages. Our inactivity will be an argument of our weakness, and may injure our Credit and Consequence with Foreign Powers. This may influence the negotiations of Europe to our disadvantage. I would not suppose it could alienate our allies, or induce them to renounce our interests. Their own, if well understood, are too closely interwoven; their National Faith and Honor are pledged. At home, too, it may serve to dispirit the people, and give confidence to the disaffected. It will give leisure for factious and discontented Spirits to work and excite divisions. If the Enemy were once expelled, no European misfortunes, on our side would probably tempt England to recommence the War in America; but, if they possess a footing among us, and have an army and a Fleet on our Coast, an adverse turn of affairs with our allies might enable them to renew their exertions here. How far these inconveniences ought to determine us to one great, vigorous Effort at all hazards, Congress can alone be a competent Judge.

The degree of probability there is, of an evacuation of these States for some time past has made it a favorite object with me to make eventual preparations for operating against Niagara in particular, and Canada in general, in case that event should happen.— I have given pretty extensive directions for this purpose. But the more closely I look into the state of our finances and resources, the more I am shaken in my judgment of the propriety of going into a very great certain expense for an uncertain advantage. If the enemy go away, it will be extremely disagreeable

to be unprepared for improving the opportunity; but, when I consider the necessity of Economy in our present circumstances, I am almost ready to submit to that inconvenience. I shall however be glad to receive explicit instructions on this head.

I shall beg leave for the present to confine my observations to these points, and defer giving my Sentiments on other matters submitted, till these are determined. I am in some dilemma with respect to the propriety of my continuance in the city. Many reasons operate to make my presence with the army proper; and my stay here will become peculiarly ineligible, if any offensive plan should be preferred. I submit it to the Committee whether the other matters may not be as well transacted by letter from Camp, as by remaining here. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

HEAD QUARTERS, PHILADELPHIA,
18 January, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have before me your favor dated thro' mistake the 31st Inst. and one of the 8th.

The mutiny of the Soldiers in Huntington's brigade was on its first appearance of a very alarming nature, but I am in hopes from the success with which your spirited exertions were attended in dispersing them, that there is no danger of farther connection.

The conduct which a Commanding officer is to observe in cases of this kind in general, is to use

every means for discovering the Authors of the mischief—to inflict instant punishment on them and reclaim the rest by Clemency. The impression made on the minds of the multitude by the terror of the example—and their inability to take any resolution when deprived of their Ring leaders—are a sufficient security against farther attempts. Humanity and Policy unite in prescribing such limits to Capital Punishments, when the Crime has been so general.

With respect to the application in the present instance, and the doubt which arises from the foundation of complaint which the men have, it is to be observed that their mode of pursuing Redress, is of so dangerous a tendency as to call for the exercise of wholesome severity—and tho' the circumstances may require it to be tempered with more lenity than in ordinary cases—such a subversion of discipline and subordination cannot be passed unpunished. You will be best able to judge from the degree of culpability of those in confinement, what measures ought to be taken respecting them—if there are any proper subjects for execution among them—it is to be regretted that the matter has suffered any delay.

If the same causes should unluckily give birth to any future mutiny—the conduct above mentioned must be pursued—the severest and most summary example must be made of the Leaders—while a representation is made to the rest, in firm and at the same time conciliatory Language.—that no measure compatible with our present circumstances is omitted for providing them—that Mutiny will not only

be ineffectual in procuring a Remedy but involve consequences infinitely worse than the evil complained of.
* * * [1]

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

PHILADELPHIA, 20 January, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

That the Officers of the Army are in a very disagreeable situation, that the most unhappy consequences are to be apprehended, if they are not

[1] "I am exceedingly sorry to find by a letter from General Varnum of the 29th ulto., That a spirit of Mutiny has made its appearance among the troops under your command. I am convinced this does not originate with the common Soldiers and therefore I would wish that every possible endeavor should be made use of to trace the evil to the fountain head, that the Agitators may, if discovered be made examples. Genl. Varnum informs me that he quelled the Rioters by fair words before they had proceeded to any great lengths. This may have been prudent in the first instant, but I beg you may keep a very strict watch upon their future conduct, and if you find the least appearance of another attempt of the same kind punish those who are the movers instantly and severely. The depreciation of our Currency and the advance of necessaries are made the ostensible reasons for these disturbances. These are evils which are felt by all, but by none less than the common soldier who is intirely fed and chiefly cloathed by the public. I have not the least doubt but if the officers are attentive to the first emotions among the Soldiers, and act with spirit and firmness upon the occasion that all tumults will subside and good order and discipline again prevail."—*Washington to General Sullivan*, 14 February, 1779.

"It is no easy matter and always requires great effort of judgement to extinguish a general spirit of complaint without punishing the principal offenders; for soldiers are restrained more by fear than by argument—by severe and well timed examples than cool and lenient measures. I could wish there were no reasons to suppose that the soldiers have drawn encouragement from the sentiments or unguarded expressions of their officers; and that officers having a sense of the duty they owe their country would endeavor to accommodate the minds of the soldiery to the circumstances of the times. That mutinous spirit which some corps have lately discovered, averse from order and subordination, must be extinguished by every means in our power, and punishments enforced proportionate to the nature and consequences of the crime. As in the late case I will not doubt your exertions should such licentiousness ever again make its appearance."—*Washington to General Varnum*, 14 February, 1779.

speedily placed in a better, and that therefore some provision, more adequate than has yet been made, is absolutely necessary, are truths so obvious and so generally acknowledged, that it would almost seem superfluous to say anything to enforce them.—But it is a point in which, in my opinion, the public safety is so essentially concerned, that I cannot let slip any opportunity of urging its importance, and pressing it upon the public attention. I have more than once intimated, that even a dissolution of the army is not an improbable event, if some effectual measures were not taken to render the situation of the officers more comfortable. If this event has not happened, we ought not to infer from thence, that it will not happen. Many favorable circumstances have intervened to protract it, but the Causes that lead to it are daily increasing. Had it not been for the happy change, which took place in our political affairs last Winter, and the new prospects it opened, which for a time diverted the minds of the officers from an attention to their distresses, and encouraged a hope of their having a speedy termination, it is much to be doubted, from the discontents which then prevailed, whether we should now have had more than the shadow of an army. The temporary consolation derived from this has subsided, their passions have returned into the former Channel, the difficulty of supplying their wants has greatly increased, the expectation of the War being near its end has vanished, or at least lost a great part of its force.—The large fortunes acquired by numbers out of the army affords

a contrast, that gives poignancy to every inconveniency from remaining in it.—The officers have begun again to realize their condition, and I fear few of them can or will remain in the service on the present establishment; It is unnecessary to add, that an Army cannot exist without officers.

The patience of the officers has been a long time nourished by the hope, that some adequate provision was in contemplation. Though nothing satisfactory has hitherto been done, their hopes have been still kept alive; But this cannot be much longer the case, and when they come once to fix an opinion, that they have nothing to expect, they will no longer combat the necessity, that drives them from the service. It is worthy of observation, that the state of inactivity, to which we may probably be compelled the next Campaign, will give leisure for cherishing their discontents, and dwelling upon all the hardships of their situation. When men are employed, and have the incitements of military honor to engage their ambition and pride, they will cheerfully submit to inconveniences, which in a state of tranquillity would appear insupportable. Indeed, not to multiply arguments upon a subject so evident, it is a fact not to be controverted, that the officers cannot suppport themselves with their present pay; that *necessity* will oblige them to leave the service unless better provided for; and, that remaining in it, those who have no fortunes will want the common necessities of life, and those who have fortunes must ruin them.

The object that ought to be aimed at, is not a par-

tial expedient, so far to satisfy the officers as merely to keep them from leaving the service—they ought, if possible to be interested in it, in a manner that will call forth the full exertion of their Zeal. It is not enough that we keep an army together, we should endeavor to have one, with all those Cements that are necessary to give it consistency and energy—The principal one is to make the Officers *take pleasure* in their situation: If they are only made to *endure* it, the Army will be an insipid, spiritless Mass, incapable of acting with Vigor and ready to tumble to pieces at every reverse of Fortune.

But the great and difficult question is—what provision can be made to answer the purpose in view. I confess I am at a loss even to satisfy my own judgment. Men are in most cases governed first by what they feel and next by what they hope—present support and the relief of present necessity is therefore the first object to which we should attend. But after revolving the subject in every point of light, I can think of no practicable plan for this purpose that promises to be intirely effectual—An expedient long thought of but never really carried into execution will perhaps go furthest towards it and be the least objectionable of any that can be adopted. I mean the providing them with Cloathing by public authority at prices proportioned to their pay, at the value of the Currency when it was settled—This expedient if undertaken, ought to be prosecuted in earnest. It should not prove a nominal but a real relief, and in order to this, not only every exertion should be made to provide sup-

plies on Continental account but each State should be seriously engaged to provide for its own Officers till the end is accomplished. If it should be found in some instances that Cloathing cannot be procured, a compleat equivalent in money is the next resource—With this the officers may endeavor to provide themselves—but this substitute would be subject to many inconveniences, that render it infinitely preferable they should be supplied with Cloathing. An officer may often not be able to supply himself with the money, and in order to do it may be obliged to leave Camp and exhaust a considerable part of it in expenses of travelling and subsistence.

It would be necessary to ascertain the quantity of Cloathing to be allowed in this way and the prices, and to have a pecuniary equivalent fixed in lieu of each article when they cannot be furnished, according to the actual difference between the estimated prices and the real present cost of the Articles. This would place the provision upon a certain footing and be more satisfactory, than if it should be left to the discretion of the Cloathier to make what charges and allowances he pleased.

The measure here recommended, alone would be far from sufficient—Something must be done in addition to enable the Officers to subsist themselves more comfortably in Camp. Their present Ration and the subsistence money allowed are very inadequate. The manner of living of those who have no other dependence is not only unsuited to the Station of an Officer, but even indigent and miserable. It would serve in

some measure to remedy this, if instead of the subsistence money now granted, the Commissary General was every month, or every two or three Months to regulate the Value of the extra Rations they formerly received according to the real Cost, at the time of the Articles which compose it, and the Commander in Chief or commanding officer in a department empowered to order payment agreeable to that estimate.

But these expedients, though I should hope they would go a great way towards satisfying the officers would not give such perfect satisfaction as were to be desired. The most that could be expected from them, if so much, is that they would make their present situation tolerable. This would not compensate in their minds for the sacrifices of private interest and ease which they think they are making to the public good, and for the disagreeable prospect of future indigence which their continuance in the service exhibits, after they are no longer wanted in the Field. To attach them heartily to the service, their expectations of futurity must be interested.

After the Steps, which have been already taken in the Affair of a half-pay and pensionary Establishment, it is not without great reluctance I venture to revive it. But I am so thoroughly convinced of its utility, that notwithstanding some disadvantages, which may attend it, I am firmly persuaded it would in the main be advancive of the public good. I therefore take the liberty to bring it a moment under review.

I beg leave to repeat what I have said upon some former occasions, that no step could in my opinion be

taken, which would be so pleasing to the officers, and which would bind them so forcibly to the Service. Our military System would certainly derive infinite Benefit from it; and it appears to me, that it ought to be a primary object of Government to put that upon the best footing our circumstances will permit. On principles of Economy I think there can be no solid objections to the plan. No mode can, I believe, be devised to give satisfaction, which will be more convenient and less expensive. The difference indeed in point of expense, between the present form of the half-pay establishment, and one for life, would be inconsiderable. Seven years will probably be the period of the lives of the greatest part of the incumbents, and few of the survivors will much exceed it. But the difference in the provision in the estimation of the officer's own mind is very great. In one case he has a provision for life, whether it be long or short; in the other, for a limited period, which he can look beyond, and naturally flatters himself he shall outlive.

The Resolve directing the half-pay for seven years contains some provisos and restrictions, which, though perhaps unimportant in themselves, were interpreted in a manner that gave an unfavorable aspect to the measure, and more than disappointed its intended effect. With respect to a pensionary establishment for officers' Widows, nothing can be a more encouraging reflection to a married Man, than that, in case of accident to himself, his family is left with some dependence to preserve them from want, and nothing can be a more painful and discouraging one than the reverse. The chief objection, which I have heard to

this plan, is, that the principle of pensioning is incompatible with the maxims of our government. The truth of this objection I shall not controvert, but I think it applies equally to an establishment for seven years, as to one for life. It is alike a pension in both Cases, in one for a fixed and determinate, in the other for a contingent period. All that can be said is, that we submit to one inconvenience to avoid a greater; and, if it operates as a bad precedent, we must endeavor to correct it when we have it in our power.

One thing however I think it necessary to observe, that, unless the Committee should be fully convinced of the necessity of the establishment proposed, and should be clearly of opinion, that it will meet the concurrence of Congress, the best way will be, not to put it to the experiment of a debate. If it be once known, that such a question is in agitation, it will again raise the hopes and solicitudes of the officers, and, if it fails, renew all their former discontents on the same subject, and, under their present circumstances, with redoubled violence. It is a point in which their feelings are much engaged, and these ought not to be awakened if they are not to be gratified. I have just received a letter of the 9th instant from his Excellency the Governor of the State of Virginia accompanied by several late Acts of the Legislature both for recruiting their troops and more comfortably providing the officers and men. The general spirit of these Acts corresponds with the measures I have taken the liberty to recommend.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL McINTOSH.

PHILADELPHIA, 31 January, 1779.

DEAR SIR:

I have your favr. without date inclosing a Return of the Troops to the Westward and Colo. Gibson's letter and message from the Indians. I make no doubt but you have had a sufficiency of difficulties to struggle with, but am glad to find that the steps you have taken have given at least a temporary relief to the Inhabitants upon the frontier, and I hope by pursuing a steady and properly concerted plan next Campaign we may, if we cannot engage the friendship of the savages, reduce them to the necessity of remaining quiet. To effect this, it is determined, at present, to carry the War into the Indian Country next Spring as early as the Season and the State of our Magazines will admit. No particular plan is yet fixed, nor are the places which will be the most proper objects of attack yet marked out. But as we may conclude that Fort Pitt will be one of the principal places from whence we shall commence our operations,—I must desire you will immediately upon the Rect. of this, set about making the following preparations and collecting the necessary intelligence of the State of the Country, Waters, &ca over which we shall probably pass. It will in the first place be necessary to provide Batteaux or Canoes (whichever may be thought most suitable for the Waters of that Country) for say 1000 or 1200 Men, and endeavor to form Magazines sufficient for the same number for three or four months. From your letter to me and those to the Board of War, I imagine you will be able to do little

towards the latter, as the provisions must chiefly go from below, I shall therefore endeavor to put matters in a proper train for the formation of Magazines as early as possible, before I leave this town.

I would wish you to have the Country well explored between Pittsburg and Detroit by the way of Tuscarawas and also the water Conveyances to that post (Detroit) by the Scioto and other waters leading out of the Ohio towards Lake Erie, and the distance of Portage between the heads of those Rivers and the Waters of the Lake. Attention should also be paid to the face of the Country, whether wet or dry, level or broken, and how furnished with herbage—I would also have you make yourself perfectly informed of the Water and land communication between Pittsburg and Presqueile—what kind of Craft can pass up French Creek (or River la Bœuf) and whether such Craft can be transported across from French Creek to the Lake, and if they can, whether they would be of sufficient size and strength to coast it along Lake Erie—The Road from la Bœuf to Presqueile is probably much out of repair, it will therefore be necessary that those who are sent to gain information should take particular notice of its condition and whether it would be a work of much labor and time to make it passable for a Body of Men with the common incumbrances of Stores, Baggage, &ca. If the Batteaux or Canoes that are built in the Ohio, can be carried from the River la Bœuf to Presqueile—and can live in Lake Erie (I mean by coasting) and could pass in defiance of the Enemy's armed Vessels upon the

Lake, I should not hesitate to pronounce this the easiest, cheapest, and safest Rout to Detroit should that be made the object: But if an expedition against the Indians of the Six Nations should be determined upon in preference to the other, it will be necessary to inquire how far the Force assembled at Pittsburg seemingly with an intent to operate either against the Indians upon the Ohio, or agt. Detroit may be turned to a co-operation with other Bodies from Albany—from the Susquehannah, or perhaps from both—To form a judgment of the practicability of this, the distance between Fort Pitt and the Country of the Six Nations especially the Senecas, who are most numerous, warlike and inimical of the whole, should be exactly ascertained, and whether the Country is generally level or hilly, dry or swampy. If there are more Routes than one, that which admits of most water carriage should be preferred for obvious reasons. When the Northern Indians go to War with the Southern they fall into the Alleghany River and come down from thence to Fort Pitt. Whether they travel by land to the Alleghany or whether they make use of any water carriage is a matter worth enquiring into, they probably make use of the easiest and most expeditious Route, and if it serves them to come down to the Southward, it will be equally useful to us should we penetrate their Country. let it also be inquired how far this Route is wide of the falls of Niagara and Lake Erie.

Persons (either Indians or Whites) of trust should be hired for the several purposes before mentioned,

they should not know that we ourselves are undetermined as to the plan of our operations, and then each party will suppose that the Route which they are sent to explore is the one by which we mean to carry on an expedition. If they betray the confidence reposed in them, they will deceive the Enemy in every quarter but that which may happen to be our real object. As the force collected at and the preparations made at Fort Pitt will point equally every way, it will add to the distraction of the enemy should they find out that we are making inquiries concerning the different Routes leading to their posts.

Should our Arms be turned against the Six Nations, and the Indians upon the Ohio and Country West of it shew a disposition for peace, they should be encouraged in it by all means, as it would be bad policy to irritate them while we are employed another way. If we can reduce or force the Six Nations to a submission it will have an admirable effect upon all the Western tribes, who tho' perhaps full as powerful in fact, yet pay the utmost respect to them, and would not willingly offend a people who had chastised the most warlike Nations.

You will inquire what Roads and passes lead from the Northwestern Frontiers of Pennsylvania to Venango and other places upon Alleghany River above that post, and whether supplies for Troops in that quarter can be transported by such Roads or passes upon pack horses. You will inform yourself of the times that the Grass will have gained sufficient growth to subsist your Cattle and Horses and the Waters

have fallen so as to make such of them fordable as are to be passed without Boats, that we may not begin to move from the Northward before you are ready. For whether there shall be a co-operation between your force and that from Albany and Susquehannah, or whether you act intirely in a different quarter from them, every good consequence will result from the attacks being commenced at the same time.

I would recommend it to you immediately to discharge every useless mouth that your Magazines may be spared as much as possible.

After having obtained the best information that you can upon the several points before mentioned—giving necessary orders for the establishment of Magazines as far as the circumstances and situation of things in that part of the Country will admit, and seen the Batteaus or Canoes in a proper train for execution, you will be pleased to repair to Head Quarters that something precise and definitive may be determined in a personal conference respecting the operations of the Campaign. You had better bring, or send before you if it will save time, a list of such stores as will in your opinion be necessary for the execution of either of the plans before mentioned.

Congress having by a late Resolve (Copy of which you have inclosed) vested me with the power of directing and superintending the military operations in all the departments in these States, the Board of War have delivered me all the papers, relating to the Affairs to the Westward and you will therefore probably not hear from them in answer to your late letters.

You may be assured of every assistance from me to enable you to execute the objects of your command with satisfaction to the public and yourself, as I am, &c., &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
11 February, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

It was not till the 5th instant, I returned to this place. While in Philadelphia what between Congress and a special committee of that body I was furnished with ample employment. I had few moments of relaxation, and could do little more than barely acknowledge the receipt of your obliging favors of the 27th of December and the 1st and 2d of January Ulto. Even now I find it impossible to be as explicit and comprehensive as I could wish in this letter my common business having run so much behind hand during my absence from the army, but as the season is advancing, and no time to be lost, which can be employed in preparing for such operations as our circumstances will allow us to adopt for the ensuing campaign, I shall thank you for your opinion and aid in the several objects of this letter. Some of them were contained in my last, however, I shall repeat them again for fear of a miscarriage.

1st. What number of men do you conceive necessary for an expedition against the hostile tribes of the Six Nations and the force which it is probable they will bring to their aid?

2d. What part of the Indian Settlement should be considered as the central point to which all the force of the expedition from the different quarters; should be directed where a junction of the whole should take place?

3d. Whether any and if so, what artillery will be necessary? And what stores most proper for such an expedition and the quantities of each?

4th. The best route to approach their settlements? Three different routes have been suggested. The 1st by the way of Fort Schuyler, the Oneida lake, and Cayuga or Seneca river. The second by a land march wholly from fort Schuyler, the difficulties of which are variously stated; some making the passage through the country easy, others representing it as the reverse. The 3d by a portage from the Mohawk river, to the East branch of the Susquehannah & down this to a branch made use of by the Indians in their invasion of our frontiers. The advisability of the second will depend in a great measure on the kind of country to be passed through, and that of the first and last upon the goodness and extent of the water carriage. For this will serve only in part; and requiring horses and pack saddles for the performance of the rest, it then becomes a question which is to be preferred in point of economy—time and other circumstances—That wholly by land, or that composed of both land and water portage.

5th. In case the 3d or last route should be preferred, what is the distance of transporting batteaux from the Mohawk river to the Susquehannah, and the

physical or natural obstructions? This should be fully scrutinized. Indeed every foot of the route if possible should be described, and the difficulties and the distances from place to place minutely ascertained.

I could wish a similar critical examination of each of the other routes. This would be attended with other advantages, besides those arising to the expedition from a comparative view. The same attention given to each avenue by which the country is accessible must distract the enemy, and may produce a confusion and irresolution in their measures for defence,

6th. The route being fixed on, what time (making a reasonable allowance for unforseen delays) will it require to penetrate to the heart of the Indian country or to the principal object or point of the expedition.

If a water transportation is to be used either in whole or in part, what inconveniences or obstructions may be expected from the state of the rivers at the season in which the expedition should be executed? And if pack horses are to be employed, and their chief support to be grass, when should the operations commence. Further it is indispensably necessary to ascertain the precise moment for the movement of the main body that diversions from different points may be exactly timed for co-operation.

7th. What distance is it from the Seneca towns to fort Pitt? What kind of a country between? And the land and water transportation?

8th. Is it essentially necessary to have slight stock-

ade forts erected as the Army advances, for the benefit of convoys, and the security of a retreat in case of misfortune? Or, is it, that the good to be expected from *such* works, would be more than overbalanced by the delays occasioned in erecting them, the diminution of strength which the army would suffer in small garrisons—and the advantages which the enemy may derive from the slowness of our movements with the knowledge of our designs. Or what is the proper medium?

9th. Will it do to have the provisions to follow after the army, in case there are no forts constructed, or must the whole stock accompany the army from its first movement?

10th. When ought the troops to rendezvous and where? And how long is it probable they will be engaged in this expedition?

11th. At what places should magazines be formed, and when, and for how many days?

12th. How many batteaux will be wanted for this expedition? or are those on hand of the proper kind and sufficient in number?

If we are to build more, no time should be lost. It should be set about immediately and the requisite number completed as soon as possible.

13. What precautions are to be devised to alarm the enemy in Canada, thereby to prevent the troops in that country coming to Ontario to the aid of the Indian nations?

To these many questions would occur, if I had more leisure to pursue the subject: But your time

and good judgment will take in every other consideration of policy or importance. When you have committed your thoughts and enquiries on this occasion you will be pleased to transmit them by some trusty conveyance.

It will be necessary, immediately to employ proper persons unacquainted with each other's business to mix with the hostile Indians that the most unequivocal information may be gained of their strength & sentiments, their intentions and what ideas they may have acquired of our design. We should also learn what support or assistance they expect in case our intended expedition should be known to them; or what precautions they are taking to oppose our operations.

The Indians in friendship with us, may be sent on this purpose. The half tories also if they can be engaged, and will leave pledges as a security for their fidelity might prove very useful instruments. Similar investigations should be carried into Canada, and the garrison at Niagara.

I shall likewise depend on your exertions in having the different routes to the object of the expedition critically explored both by Indians and others, so that a complete knowledge of distances, natural difficulties and the face and nature of the country may be precisely obtained.

I must beg the use of your manuscripts a little longer. Some of them I think interesting. I shall keep them till I find a safe hand to intrust them to or till I have the pleasure of seeing you at Camp. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
26 February, 1779.

SIR,

Yesterday morning a detachment of the enemy from Staten Island made an attempt to surprise the post at Elizabethtown. On receiving information of it, General St. Clair with the Pennsylvania division, and General Smallwood with the Maryland division, were put in motion by different routes to form a junction at the Scotch Plains, and proceed to reinforce General Maxwell and act as circumstances should require. Intelligence of the sudden retreat of the enemy occasioned their recall before they had advanced far. The enclosed copy of a letter from General Maxwell will furnish all the particulars I have received of this fruitless incursion.

Through hurry of business in Philadelphia and since my arrival here, the papers relating to the inquiry into the conduct of the late quartermaster-general have till now escaped a particular consideration. A difficulty occurs in executing the direction of Congress for bringing the affair to a military decision, which requires to be explained. It is a received opinion, that Major-General Mifflin has resigned his commission in the army. If this be true, as he is no longer an officer, I should not conceive that he can be amenable to a military tribunal. I request to be favored with information on this head. With very great respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN JAY, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

MIDDLEBROOK, 1 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have been a little surprised, that the several important pieces of intelligence lately received from Europe, (such parts I mean, as are circulated without reserve in conversation), have not been given to the public in a manner calculated to attract the attention and impress the minds of the people. As they are now propagated, they run through the country in a variety of forms, are confounded in the common mass of general rumors, and lose a great part of their effect. It would certainly be attended with many valuable consequences if they could be given to the people in some more authentic and pointed manner. It would assist the measures taken to restore our currency, promote the recruiting of the army and our other military arrangements, and give a certain spring to our affairs in general. Congress may have particular reasons for not communicating the intelligence officially (which would certainly be the best mode if it could be done;) but, if it cannot, it were to be wished, that as much as is intended to be commonly known, could be published in as striking a way, and with as great an appearance of authority as may be consistent with propriety.

I have taken the liberty to trouble you with this hint, as sometimes things the most obvious escape attention. If you agree with me in sentiment, you

will easily fall upon the most proper mode for answering the purpose. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.[1]

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

HEAD QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
3d March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I was a few days ago honored with yours of the 18th ulto., inclosing the depositions of several inhabitants and civil officers, respecting ill treatment recd.

[1] The President of Congress replied:—"The opinion, that greater advantage results from communicating important events to the people, in an authentic way, than by unauthorized reports, is certainly just, though often neglected. The intelligence alluded to is unfortunately of such a nature, or rather so circumstanced, as to render secrecy necessary. As Congress, with the consent of the Minister of France, have directed it to be communicated to you, further remarks will be unnecessary. Dr. Witherspoon, who lately returned to Jersey, promised to do it in a personal conference."—*MS. Letter*, March 3d.

This intelligence related to a project of Congress for attempting to recover Georgia, by sending an army to act in conjunction with Count d'Estaing, who was then in the West Indies. Congress applied to M. Gerard, the French minister, for four frigates out of Count d'Estaing's squadron to operate against the enemy in Georgia and Carolina. M. Gerard answered, that they would weaken Count d'Estaing's armament too much, and moreover would not be sufficient to meet the enemy's forces at the south; and that this would in any case be an extraordinary service, which, by the conditions of the treaty, would demand a compensation from the United States. The committee of Congress, who held the conference with M. Gerard, argued from the fourth article of the treaty, that the king was bound to render assistance to the United States, and that the condition of affairs in Georgia rendered this assistance necessary and important. They said the demand for compensation could only have place where one of the allies required assistance from the other for an object of conquest, and never when the proposed expedition had for its end the interest of the alliance; and that in the former case a compensation would be just, but to apply this stipulation to objects of the latter kind, would be to frustrate the purpose of the alliance. They proposed, therefore, to reserve the question of compensation for the decision of the sovereign powers.

M. Gerard replied, that the treaty explained the intentions of the contracting

from sundry officers of the army, and a refusal in some of them to submit to the civil process. Major Call and Mr. Heath, two of the officers, are at Winchester in Virginia, in Winter-Quarters, a very considerable distance from hence; but, if you are of opinion, that there is an immediate necessity for their appearance to answer the charges against them, I will order them down. Capt. Van Heer and Mr. Skinner are in Camp. From the conclusion of your letter, you seem willing to suffer the matter to be compromised by the parties, to prevent further trouble. I rather wish that the several charges may be fully investigated, and that the officers may, if they are

parties with so much precision, that he could not admit its sense to be doubtful; that it was necessary to take all the parts of the treaty together; that the first articles contained the principles, of which the following ones were modifications; that the obligation of mutual assistance certainly existed, and that the king would fulfil it with fidelity, but conformably to what his own situation would admit; that the principle from which they were to set out was, that each party was to carry on the war on its own accord against the common enemy; that his Majesty would fulfil this obligation by employing all his force, and doing all the injury possible to the enemy; that his efforts would be equally useful to the alliance, in whatever part of the world they might be made; that this principle was founded on the distance of places, the impossibility of a concert, the difficulties and delays of a correspondence, the necessity of preventing dissensions between parties, and the impossibility of combining expeditions under these circumstances; that there was no distinction between such an expedition as they proposed, and one that should have conquest for its object. M. Gerard added, that the proposition of Congress tended to *interpret* the treaty, that he had no authority to accord to any definite interpretation, or rather to fix an interpretation, and that the only thing that could admit of a reference was, to determine what the compensation ought to be, and not when it could be demanded. Count d'Estaing came to America with orders to act under the requisitions of Congress, while he was in the American seas. He had now left those seas, and was promoting the general objects of the alliance by carrying on the war separately. He could be called back by Congress only with the assurance of a compensation.—*MS. Letter from M. Gerard to Count de Vergennes*, February 12th.—*Sparks*.

found guilty, be dealt with according to law, civil or military, in whichever Court they may be tried, or, if innocent, honorably acquitted. I therefore propose, that the parties accusing Van Heer and Skinner should institute civil suits against them, to which I will engage they shall submit; or, if they will leave it to a military determination, I will order a Court-Martial, which will be the speediest method of bringing it to an issue.

I am every now and then embarrassed by disputes between the officers and Inhabitants, which generally originate from the latter coming into camp with liquor, selling it to the Soldiers, and, as the officers allege, taking clothing, provisions, or accoutrements in pay. There being no civil redress, that I know of, for a grievance of this nature, the officers undertake to punish those suspected of such practices, sometimes with reason, and probably sometimes without foundation. If there is no law of the State to prevent this kind of commerce between the people and the Soldiery, it would have a very good effect to procure one, prohibiting an inhabitant from selling liquor to the Soldiers, within the limits of the Camp, without leave obtained from the commanding officer of the quarter into which it may be brought, and imposing a penalty, recoverable by a summary process before a magistrate, upon any person receiving Arms, Accoutrements, Clothing, or provisions from a soldier by way of purchase, or in exchange for any commodity brought into camp for sale.

An act of this kind would relieve the considerate

officer from the disagreeable necessity, in which he is often involved, of submitting to a grievance destructive of every military principle, or undertaking to punish a citizen by virtue of his own authority; and it will point out a mode of redress to others, too willing perhaps to exercise military power, when they have an opportunity or excuse for so doing. I congratulate you on your late escape at Elizabethtown, and I am very sincerely, dear Sir, your most obedient servant.[1] I return you the affidavits agreeable to your request.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

HEAD QUARTERS, 3 March, 1779.

SIR,

The president of Congress has transmitted me the Instructions of the Assembly of your State to their Delegates, founded on a representation of the distresses of your western frontiers—and farther the opinion of a Committee of the House on the subject of their defence—together with the two Resolves made in consequence.

I am therefore to inform Your Excellency that offensive operations against the hostile tribes of Indians have been meditated and determined upon some time since—that preparations have been mak-

[1] A party of British troops landed near Elizabethtown, on the 28th of February, and succeeded in reaching the house of Governor Livingston. Fortunately he had left home several hours before, and was at the house of a friend a few miles distant, although his family were at home. The British officer seized some of the Governor's papers and carried them off, but no acts of violence were committed. A few of the houses were burned in the village. See the particulars in Sedgwick's *Life of William Livingston*, p. 322.

ing for that purpose—and will be carried into execution at a proper season if no unexpected event takes place, and the situation of affairs on the Seaboard will justify the undertaking—But the profoundest secrecy was judged necessary to the success of such an Enterprise for the following obvious reasons—That immediately upon the discovery of our design the Savages would either put themselves in condition to make head against us, by a reunion of all their force, and that of their allies, strengthened besides by succors from Canada,—or elude the expedition altogether—which might be done at the expence only of a temporary evacuation of forests which we could not possess—and the destruction of a few settlements, which they might speedily reestablish.

Tho' this matter is less under the veil of secrecy than was originally intended—Your Excellency will see the propriety of using such precautions as still remain in our power—to prevent its being divulgated—and of covering such preparations as might tend to announce it—with the most specious disguise that the enemy's attention may not be awakened to our real object.

With respect to the force to be employed on this occasion—it is scarcely necessary to observe that the detaching a considerable number of Continental Troops on such a remote expedition would too much expose the country adjacent to the body of the enemy's Army.

There must therefore be efficacious assistance derived from the States whose frontiers are obnoxious to the inroads of the barbarians—and for this I

intended at the proper time to make application—Your Excellency will be pleased to acquaint me what force yours in particular can furnish in addition to the five Companies voted by Congress—when you think those Companies or the major part of them will probably be raised—What proportion of the levies of your State might be drawn from those inhabitants who have been driven from the frontier—And what previous measures can be taken to engage them without giving an alarm—This Class of people besides the advantages of knowledge of the Country, and the particular motives with which they are animated—will be most likely to furnish the troops best calculated for this service—

They should be Corps of active Rangers, who are at the same time expert marksmen and accustomed to the irregular kind of wood-fighting practiced by the Indians. Men of this description embodied under proper officers would be infinitely preferable to a superior number of Militia unacquainted with this species of war and who would exhaust the magazines of Ammunition and Provision—without rendering any effectual service.

It will be a very necessary attention to avoid the danger of short inlistments—their service should be limited only by the expedition or a term amply competent to it—other wise we shall be exposed to the ill-consequences of having their engagements expire at an interesting perhaps a critical juncture.—I have the honor to be, etc.[1]

[1] A similar letter was sent to Governor Clinton of New York.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

MIDDLEBROOK, 6th March, 1779.

SIR,

By the enclosed copy of a resolution of the 25 of Feby. last, you will perceive it is the desire of Congress, that some offensive expedition should be carried on against the Indians the ensuing campaign. With an eye to a measure of this kind, I have some time since directed preparations to be made at such places, as appeared to me most proper for the purpose; to be completed by the 1st day of May, at which time it is my intention, that the operation shall begin. The objects of this expedition will be effectually to chastise and intimidate the hostile nations, to countenance and encourage the friendly ones, and to relieve our frontiers from the depredations to which they would otherwise be exposed. To effect these purposes, it is proposed to carry the war into the heart of the country of the Six Nations, to cut off their settlements, destroy their next year's crops, and do them every other mischief, which time and circumstances will permit.

From the best information I have been hitherto able to collect, the whole number of warriors of the Six Nations, including the Tories who have joined them, will amount to about three thousand. To these must be added the aid they may derive from Canada, and from the British garrisons on the frontiers. The force we shall have it in our power to employ on the expedition will be about four thousand Continental troops, (I mean rank and file fit for service,) besides such aids

of Militia as may be deemed absolutely necessary. These, however, will not be large, as Congress are endeavoring to pursue a plan of strict economy, and to avoid calling out the militia, which is attended with great loss and expense. To obviate the necessity of it, I have strained the supply of Continental troops to the utmost extent, which a comparison of our collective force and that of the enemy will possibly permit. Three thousand of the abovementioned number will compose the main body; the remainder will be employed in different quarters to harass and distract the enemy, and create diversions in favor of the principal operation. It would be improper to hazard upon paper a more minute detail of the plan.

I am now to express my wish, that it may be agreeable to you to undertake the command of this expedition; in which case you will be pleased to repair to head-quarters without delay, to make the necessary previous arrangements and enter upon the business. The season is so far advanced, that not a moment's time is to be lost. But, as I am uncertain whether your health or other considerations will permit you to accept a command of this nature, and as the advanced state of the season already mentioned will not allow me to wait an answer, I have enclosed a letter for General Sullivan, on whom, if you decline it, it is my intention the command shall devolve. Should you accept, you will retain the letter and return it to me; if not, you will immediately transmit it to him. Whether you accept or not, you will be sensible of the necessity of secrecy. The less our design is

known or suspected by ye enemy, the more easy and certain will be its execution.[1] It will also be of importance to its success to endeavor to prevent succors coming from Canada. This will be best effected by hanging out false appearances to deceive the enemy there, and beget jealousies for their own security. Among other expedients conducive to this end, one may be, to make inquiry with an air of mystery, and yet in such a way as will spread the idea, what force of militia could be derived from the State of Massachusetts towards an invasion of Canada, by the way of Coos, in case of the appearance of a French fleet and army in the river St. Lawrence. You will employ this and any other artifices that may occur to you for the purpose.[2] In the event of General Sullivan's leaving Providence, you will take the immediate command of the troops now under him. I am, &c.

[1] The command was offered to Gates as he was the senior officer; but he declined, saying: "Last night I had the honor of your Excellency's letter. The man, who undertakes the Indian service, should enjoy youth and strength; requisites I do not possess. It therefore grieves me, that your Excellency should offer me the only command, to which I am entirely unequal. In obedience to your command, I have forwarded your letter to General Sullivan, and, that he may not be one moment detained, I have desired him to leave the command with General Glover, until I arrive in Providence, which will be in a few days. You may be assured of my inviolable secrecy, and that your other directions shall be fulfilled."—*Boston*, March 16th.

General Sullivan accepted the appointment, and repaired to head-quarters.

[2] "Nothing will contribute more to our success in the quarter where we really intend to strike than alarming the enemy in a contrary one, and drawing their attention that way. To do this, you may drop hints of an expedition to Canada by way of Coos. This will be the more readily believed, as a thing of the kind was really once in agitation and some magazines formed in consequence, which the enemy are acquainted with. You may also speak of the probability of a French fleet's making its appearance in the spring in the river St. Lawrence to co-operate with us. It will be a great point gained if we can, by false

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, PARIS.

CAMP AT MIDDLEBROOK, 8 March, 1779.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I am mortified exceedingly, that my letter from Philadelphia, with the several enclosures, did not reach Boston before your departure from that port. It was written as soon as Congress had come to a decision upon the several matters, which became the subject of the President's Letter to you, and was committed (for conveyance) to the messenger, who was charged with his despatches to that place. How it happened (unless the passage of the North River was interrupted by Ice) that Letters dated Philadelphia the 29th of Decr. should be till the 15th of the following month on their passage to Boston, is inconceivable—equally so is it—that I have not had the Letters returned to me by Majr. Neville, who I am told (but this is no excuse) is indisposed at Fish Kill.—His withholding these letters renders it necessary for me to give you the trouble of duplicates by Captn. McQueen who will do me the favor of handing this to you; and whose merits are too well known to *you*, to stand in need of any recommendation from *me*.

Monsr. La Colombe did me the honor of delivering to me your favors of the 5th, 18th & 10th of Jany., and will probably be the bearer of my thanks for the

alarms, keep the force at present in Canada from affording any timely assistance to the savages, refugees, and those people against whom the blow is levelled. I would wish you to keep the motives of your joining to head-quarters a secret, because if it is known that an officer of your rank is to take a command to the westward, it will be immediately concluded that the object must be considerable."—*Washington to Major-General Sullivan*, 6 March, 1779.

affectionate manner in which you have expressed your sentiments in your last adieu, than which nothing can be more flattering and pleasing; nor is there any thing more wished for by me, than opportunities of giving substantial proofs of the sincerity of my attachment to and affection for you.[1]

Nothing of importance hath happened since you left us, except the Enemy's invasion of Georgia, and possession of its capital; which, tho it may add something to their supplies on the score of Provisions, will contribute very little to the brilliancy of their arms. For, like the defenceless island of St. Lucia, it only required the appearance of force to effect the conquest of it, as the whole militia of the State did not exceed twelve hundred men, and many of them disaffected. General Lincoln is assembling a force to dispossess them, and my only fear is, that he will precipitate the attempt before he is fully prepared for the execution. In New York and at Rhode Island, the Enemy continued quiet till the 25th ultimo, when an attempt was made by them to surprise the post at Elizabeth; but failing therein, and finding them-

[1] The Marquis de Lafayette had written from Boston on board the *Alliance*, January 11th :—"The sails are just going to be hoisted, my dear General, and I have only time to take my last leave of you. I may now be certain, that Congress do not intend to send any thing more by me. Farewell, my dear General. I hope your French friends will ever be dear to you. I hope I shall soon see you again, and tell you myself with what emotions I now leave the land you inhabit, and with what affection and respect I shall ever be your sincere friend."

By some unknown cause of delay, the last despatches of the President of Congress and General Washington did not reach the Marquis before he sailed, so that he went to France without being informed of the final decision of Congress respecting the Canada expedition.

selves close pressed, and in danger from detachments advancing towards them from this army, they retreated precipitately through a marsh waist-deep in mud, after abandoning all their plunder; but not before they had, (according to their wonted custom,) set fire to two or three Houses. The Regiment of Anspach, and some other troops, are brought from Rhode Island to New York. It would my dear Marquis have given me very great pleasure to have answered your expectation respecting Messrs. la Colombe and Houden, but Congress have experienced so many unfortunate instances of disgust, and consequent resignations in the Army arising from irregular promotions and brevet Commissions, that they found it absolutely necessary to discontinue the practice, and had done so before I received your Letters, to the no small disappointment, and loss, of many Gentlemen, whom I found in Philadelphia.

We are happy in the repeated assurances and proofs of the friendship of our great and good ally, whom we hope and trust, ere this, may be congratulated on the birth of a Prince, and on the joy which the nation must derive from an instance of royal felicity. We also flatter ourselves, that before this period the Kings of Spain and the Two Sicilies may be greeted as allies of the United States; and we are not a little pleased to find, from good authority, that the solicitations and offers of the court of Great Britain to the Empress of Russia have been rejected; nor are we to be displeased, that overtures from the city of Amsterdam, for entering into a commercial connexion with

us, have been made in such open and pointed terms. Such favorable sentiments, in so many powerful Princes and States, cannot but be considered in a very honorable, interesting, and pleasing point of view, by all those who have struggled with difficulties and misfortunes to maintain the rights and secure the liberties of their country. But, notwithstanding these flattering appearances, the British King and his ministers continue to threaten us with war and desolation. A few months, however, must decide whether these or Peace is to take place. For both we will prepare; and, should the former be continued, I shall not despair of sharing fresh toils and dangers with you in the Plains of America; but, if the latter succeeds, I can entertain little hopes, that the rural amusem'ts of an infant world, or the contracted stage of an American theatre, can withdraw your attention and services from the gayeties of a court, and the active part which you will more than probably be called upon to share in ye admr. of yr. government. The soldier will then be transformed into the statesman, and your employment in this new walk of life will afford you no time to revisit this continent, or think of friends who lament yr. absence.

The American Troops are again in Hutts; but in a more agreeable and fertile country, than they were in last winter at Valley Forge; and they are better clad and more healthy, than they have ever been since the formation of the army. Mrs. Washington is now with me, and makes a cordial tender of her best regards to you; and, if those of strangers can be

offered with propriety, and will be accepted, we respectively wish to have them added to your amiable Lady. We hope and trust, that your passage has been short, agreeable, and safe, and that you are as happy, as the smiles of a gracious Prince, beloved wife, warm friends, and high expectations can make you. I have now I think complied with your request in writing you a long letter; and I shall only add, that, with the purest sentiments of attachment, and the warmest friendship and regard, I am, my dear Marquis, your most affectionate and obliged, &c.

P. S. Harrison and Mead are in Virga.—all the other Gentn. of my suit join most cordially in tendering their best respects to you.

March 10th. I have this moment received the letters which were in the hands of Majr. Neville, accompanied by yr. favors of the 7th & 11th of Jany. —the Majr. himself is not yet arrived at head Qrs., being, as I am told very sick—I have again to thank you, my dear frd. for the repeated sentiments of friendship and affection which breathed so conspicuously in your last farewell; & to assure you that I shall always retain a warm & grateful remembrance of them.—Major Neville shall have my consent to repair to you in France; if his health will permit & the sanction of Congress can be obtained to whom all applications of officers for leave to go out of the United States are referred.—

TO SIR HENRY CLINTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
14 March, 1779.

SIR,

It is much to be regretted, that all the attempts, which have been made to establish some general and adequate rule for the exchange of prisoners, have hitherto been ineffectual. In a matter of so great importance, too much pains cannot be taken to surmount the obstacles that lie in its way, and to bring it to a satisfactory issue. With an earnest desire to effect this, the honorable the Congress have again authorized me to propose the settlement of a general cartel, and to appoint commissioners with full powers for that purpose. This proposition, in obedience to their order, I now make; and if it should meet with your concurrence, I shall be ready to send commissioners to meet others on your part, at such time and place as shall be judged convenient.

That the present attempt may not prove as unsuccessful as former ones, it is to be hoped, if there is a meeting of commissioners, that the gentlemen on both sides, apprized of the difficulties which have occurred, and with a liberal attention to the circumstances of the parties, will come disposed to accommodate their negotiations to them, and to level all unnecessary obstructions to the completion of the treaty. I have the honor to be with due respect, &c.[1]

[1] By a recent resolve, Congress had invested General Washington with full power to negotiate at his discretion a cartel of exchange, comprehending the convention troops and prisoners of every other description, to fix and conclude the terms of exchange, and to appoint commissioners for the purpose. In the same resolve it was also declared, that the acts and stipulations of the commis-

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS MIDDLEBROOK,
15 March, 1779.

SIR,

I have waited with anxious expectation for some plan to be adopted by Congress, which would have a general operation throughout the States for compleating their respective battalions. No plan for this purpose has yet come to my knowledge, nor do I find that the several governments are pursuing any measures to accomplish the end by particular arrangements of their own legislatures. I therefore hope Congress will excuse any appearance of importunity in my troubling them again on the subject, as I earnestly wish to be enabled to realize some ideas on what may

sioners of the two parties, when ratified and confirmed by the respective Commanders-in-chief, should be final and conclusive.—*Journals*, March 5th.

"Let me assure you, Sir, that my wishes coincide sincerely with those which you express for the completion of a purpose equally urged by justice and humanity. Allow me to say, that I am happy to find the direction of this affair is now entirely reposed in military hands, as I can from thence augur the same liberality of negotiation, on the part of your commissioners, which I trust you will find on ours. Colonel O'Hara having sailed for England, it requires a day or two for the person, who is to supply his place, to inform himself of the points on which the business will turn. On Monday I shall send down Colonel Hyde and Captain André to Staten Island, that they may meet your commissioners either at Amboy or Elizabethtown, as you may wish."—*Sir Henry Clinton to Washington*, 31 March, 1779.

"I am under the necessity of requesting, that it may be deferred until Monday the 12th instant, when Colonel Davies and Lieutenant-Colonel Harrison will meet Colonel Hyde and Captain André at Amboy, in the forenoon. Those gentlemen, I am persuaded, will enter upon business with the most liberal and generous dispositions; and from thence I am happy to conceive with you the most favorable expectations. You will, however, suffer me to observe, that, should the intended negotiation answer our wishes, yet it will not flow from that partiality, which you have been pleased to suppose."—*Washington to Sir Henry Clinton*, 4 April, 1779.

No agreement was reached by the commissioners when they met.

be expected towards the completion of our Battalions by the opening of the next campaign. They are already greatly reduced, and will be much more so by that time, owing to the expiration of the term of Service of the last year's drafts.

At ye posts in the highlands, Nixon's, Paterson's, and Learned's Brigades alone will suffer (by the 1st of April) a diminution of 847 men, which must be replaced, illy as they can, & reluctantly as they will be spared from the other Posts. The Committee, with whom I had the honor to confer, were of opinion, that the regimts. now in Service should be continued & completed. This was confirmed by the resolve of Congress of the 23d of Jany. last, which also directed some additional encouragements for recruiting the army during the war. Aware that this expedient, though a very useful one, could not be altogether relied on, especially if the interference of State bounties were still permitted, I furnished the Committee with my ideas of the mode, which afforded the most certain prospect of success. I shall not trouble Congress with a repetition of these, as I doubt not they have been fully reported by the Committee. Among the Troops of some States, recruiting in Camp on the new bounties has succeded tolerably well; among others, where the expectations of State bounties have had more influence, very ill[1]; upon the whole, the success

[1] By the resolution of the 23d of January, Congress had authorized the Commander-in-chief to offer a bounty of two hundred dollars for every soldier, who should enlist to serve during the war, in addition to the usual bounties of land and clothing. Enlistments had begun in camp on this principle among the troops, whose term of service was to expire in the month of June fol-

has been far short of our wishes, and will probably be so of our necessities.

I have not yet made any attempt to recruit in the country, for reasons which will be communicated by the committee; added to which, I have received information from Colonel Rawlings, who has been authorized by Congress to recruit the three companies still remaining of his battalion to their complement, that he could make no progress, in the business, on account of the inferiority of the Continental bounty to that of Virginia. The measure of enlisting in the Country, in my opinion, depends so much on the

lowing. The mode of enlistment was afterwards modified in such a manner, as to obviate the difficulties mentioned above. It was referred to the respective States to fill up their quotas in such a mode, as they should think proper, and a bounty of two hundred dollars was granted from the Continental treasury for each recruit that should enlist for the war; and in case a State should grant a greater bounty, the amount of two hundred dollars was to be put to the credit of the State for every new recruit.

The infantry of the Continental army for the next campaign was arranged in eighty battalions, of which were apportioned to New Hampshire three, Massachusetts fifteen, Rhode Island two, Connecticut eight, New York five, New Jersey three, Pennsylvania eleven, Delaware one, Maryland eight, Virginia eleven, North Carolina, six, South Carolina, six, Georgia, one.—*Journals*, March 9th. Hence, nearly one fifth of the whole army was from Massachusetts; and the number apportioned to that State was about one third larger than from any other. The ratio of the numbers actually in service was still greater.

Congress likewise determined that the officers and soldiers of the Continental artillery and cavalry should be credited to the States to which they belonged when commissioned or enlisted, and be considered as making a part of their respective quotas.—*Journals*, March 15th. Hitherto the artillery and cavalry had been under the exclusive direction of Congress, and the men had been enlisted without reference to the State apportionments. By General Knox's return of the artillery on the 5th of April, there were in the army forty-nine companies, containing in the whole sixteen hundred and seven men. When completed to their full numbers, there would be two thousand six hundred and forty-six.—*Sparks*.

abolishing of State bounties, that without it I am doubtful whether it will be worth the experiment. State bounties have been a source of immense expense and many misfortunes. The sooner the practice can be abolished, and system introduced in our manner of recruiting and keeping up our battalions, as well as in the administration of the several departments of the army, the sooner will our Security be established and placed out of the reach of contingencies. Temporary expedients, to serve the purposes of the moment, occasion more difficulties and expense than can easily be conceived.[1]

[1] The new bounty offered by Congress did not have the effect to abolish nor even to diminish State bounties. An act of the legislature of New Jersey, for completing the three battalions of the State, allowed two hundred and fifty dollars for each new recruit, in addition to the bounty of clothing, land, and two hundred dollars, given by Congress.—Wilson's *Laws of New Jersey*, p. 84. The legislature of Virginia, by an act passed on the 3d of May, offered a bounty of *seven hundred and fifty dollars* for every soldier that should enlist to serve through the war, and also a suit of clothes once a year, and one hundred acres of unappropriated land within the State. The bounty and clothing given by Congress were to be deducted from the above amount, and reserved by the State. Provision was also made for pensions to those, who should be disabled in the service, or relief to their families in case of death before their term of enlistment should expire.—Hening's *Statues at Large*, vol. x., p. 23.

Georgia proposed to give a bounty of three hundred dollars for every man who should enlist for the war.

In writing to the Board of War, General Washington said : " The enormous bounties given by the States, towns, and by individuals, to men for very short temporary services, are the source of the present discontents, and of a thousand evils among the soldiers ; and, as long as they continue to be given, so long will they excite dissatisfaction. They induce the soldier, who has undergone a long service, and who engaged for the war in the first instance on a very moderate bounty, to reason upon his situation, and to draw a comparison between what he receives and the great emoluments others get, and put him upon inventing means from which he will be able to derive the same advantage. And from this comparison and these considerations it is, I am convinced, that most of our desertions proceed, especially where the men do not go to the enemy. In con-

The superior information, which Congress may have of the political state of affairs in Europe, and of combining circumstances may induce them to believe, that there will soon be a termination of the war; and therefore that the expense of vigorous measures to reinforce the army may be avoided. If this should be the case, I dare say the reasons will be well considered before a plan is adopted, which, whatever advantages of economy it may promise, in an eventual disappointment may be productive of ruinous consequences. For my own part, I confess I should be cautious of admitting the supposition, that the War will terminate without another desperate effort on the part of the enemy. The speech of the Prince, and the debates of his ministers, have very little of the aspect of peace; and if we reflect, that they are subsequent, (as I apprehend they must have been,) to the events, on which our hopes appear to be founded, they must seem no bad argumts. of a determination in the British cabinet to continue the war. 'T is true whether this be the determination or not, 'tis a very natural policy, that every exertion should be made by them to be in the best condition to oppose their enemies, and that there should be every

sideration of the services of the soldiers, who engaged at an early period to serve during the war, and the great disproportion between the bounties they received, and those given to others for the service of a few months, or perhaps not more than a year at most, I have sometimes thought it might not be improper to give them, by way of gratuity and as an acknowledgment, one hundred dollars, which, besides operating as a reward, might have a good effect and quiet their discontent."—June 9th.

Congress took this hint, and voted a gratuity of one hundred dollars to each soldier, who had enlisted for the war previously to the 23d of January.—*Journals*, June 22d.

appearance of vigor and preparation. But if the ministry had serious thoughts of making peace, they would hardly insist so much as they do on the particular point of prosecuting the American war. They would not like to raise and inflame the expectations of the People on this subject, while it was secretly their intention to disappoint them. In America, every thing has the complexion of a continuance of the War. The operations of the enemy in the Southern States do not resemble a transient incursion, but a serious conquest. At their post in this quarter, every thing is in a state of tranquillity, and indicates a design at least to hold possession. These considerations joined to the preceding, The infinite pains that are taken to keep up the spirits of the disaffected and to assure them of support and protection, and several other circumstances, trifling in themselves but powerful when combined, amount to no contemptible evidence, that the contest is not so near an end as we could wish. I am fully sensible of many weighty reasons on the opposite side; but I do not think them sufficiently conclusive to destroy the force of what has been suggested, or to justify the sanguine inferences many seem inclined to draw.

Should the Court of Britain be able to send any reinforcements to America the next campaign, and carry on offensive operations, and should we not take some effectual means to recruit our battalions, when we shall have detached the force necessary to act decisively against the Indians, and the remaining drafts shall have returned home, the force which

remains for our defence will be very inconsiderable indeed. We must then, on every exigency, have recourse to the militia, the consequence of which, besides weakness and defeat in the field, will be double or treble the necessary expense to the public. To say nothing of the injury to agriculture, which attends calling out the militia on particular emergencies, and at some critical seasons, they are commonly twice as long in coming to the place where they are wanted and returning home, as they are in the field, and must of course for every day's real service receive two or three days' pay, and consume the same proportion of provisions.

When an important matter is suspended for deliberation in Congress, I should be sorry that my solicitude to have it determined should contribute to a premature decision. But, when I have such striking proofs of public loss and private discontent, from the present management of the clothing department; when accts. inadmissible, if any system existed, frequently remind me of the absolute necessity of introducing one; when I hear, as I often do, of large importations of cloathing, which we never see, of quantities wasting and rotting in different parts of the country, the knowledge of which reaches me by chance; when I have reason to believe, that the money, which has been expended for cloathing the army, if judiciously laid out and the cloathes regularly issued, would have effectually answered the purpose, and when I have never, till now, seen it otherwise than half naked; when I feel the perplexity and

additional load of business thrown upon me, by the irregularity in this department, and by applications from all parts of the army for relief; I cannot forbear discovering my anxiety to have some plan decided for conducting the business hereafter in a more provident and consistent manner. If the one proposed to the Committee does not coincide with the Sentiments of Congress, I should be happy if some other could be substituted. With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO HENRY LAURENS, IN CONGRESS.

MIDDLEBROOK, 20 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you, and I do it very sincerely, for your obliging favors, of the 2d and 16th Inst., and for their several enclosures, containing articles of intelligence. I congratulate you most cordially on Campbell's precipitate retreat from Fort Augusta. What was this owing to? It seems to have been a surprise even upon Williamson. But I rejoice much more on acct. of his disappointed application to the Creek Indians. This, I think, is to be considered a very important event; and may it not be the conjectural cause of his (Campbell's) hasty return? This latter circumstance cannot but be a fresh proof to the disaffected (in that country,) that they are leaning upon a broken reed. Severe examples should, in my judgment, be made of those, who were forgiven former offences and again in arms against us.

[1] Read in Congress, March 18th.

The policy of our arming slaves is in my opinion a moot point, unless the enemy set the example.[1] For, should we begin to form Battalions of them, I have not the smallest doubt, if the war is to be prosecuted, of their following us in it, and justifying the measure upon our own ground. The upshot then must be, who can arm fastest.—And where are our arms? Besides, I am not clear that a discrimination will not render slavery more irksome to those who remain in it. Most of the good and evil things in this life are judged of by comparison; and I fear a comparison in this case will be productive of much discontent in those, who are held in servitude. But, as this is a subject that has never employed much of my thoughts, these are no more than the first crude Ideas that have struck me upon ye occasion.

I had not the smallest intimation of Monsr. Gerard's passing through Jersey,[2] till I was favored with your letter, and am now ignorant of the cause, otherwise than by conjecture. The enclosed I return as Mr. Laurens left this some days ago for Philadelphia, on his way to the Southward. Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments to you, and, with every sentiment of regard and attachment, I am, dear Sir, &c.

[1] Mr. Laurens had written: "Our affairs in the southern department are more favorable, than we had considered them a few days ago; nevertheless, the country is greatly distressed, and will be more so, unless further reinforcements are sent to its relief. Had we arms for three thousand such black men, as I could select in Carolina, I should have no doubt of success in driving the British out of Georgia, and subduing East Florida, before the end of July."—March 16th.

[2] On this topic Mr. Laurens had said: "Monsieur Gerard intends a journey through New Jersey in a few days. Where he is going, is a subject not to be talked of at present, and yet it is two to one, Sir, that you have heard it."

TO COLONEL DANIEL BRODHEAD, AT FORT PITT.

HEAD-QUARTERS MIDDLEBROOK,
22d March, 1779.

SIR,

My last to you was on the 5th instant, a Copy of which I now enclose, also Copies of mine of the 31st January, 15th Feby. and 5th March to General McIntosh, lest any accident should have happened to the originals.

I have directed Colo. Rawlings, with his Corps consisting of three Companies, to march from Fort Frederic, in Maryland, (where he is guarding the British prisoners,) to Fort Pitt, as soon as he is relieved by a guard of militia. Upon his arrival you are to detach him with his own corps and as many as will make up one hundred, (should his companies be short of that number,) to take post at Kittaning, and immediately throw up a stockade Fort for the security of Convoys. When this is accomplished, a small Garrison is to be left there, and the remainder are to proceed to Venango, and establish another post of the same kind for the same purpose. The party to go provided with proper tools from Fort Pitt, and Colo. Rawlings is to be directed to make choice of good pieces of ground, and by all means to use every precaution against a surprise at either of his posts.

Colo. Gibson is to be ordered to hold himself ready to join you with his force, when matters are ripe for execution. But he is to keep his intended removal from Tuscarora a profound secret; and, when he receives his orders to march, let it be as sudden as

possible. Because whenever the evacuation of the post at Tuscarora takes place it will plainly discover that our designs are up the River—and not agst. Detroit by that Route.

(1) Perhaps it may be better to direct him to be in the most perfect readiness to march with his whole Garrison & stores, without acquainting him with the design lest it should transpire too soon—but in this matter your own judgment & knowledge of Gibson's prudence must govern.

(2) I cannot with precision say what posts along the Ohio must be kept up for quieting the fears of the people.—This must be left to your own judgment. From what I have heard Fort McIntosh is a better and more extensive cover than Fort Pitt—to the frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia and attended with advantages in intercepting Indian parties which the other has not; but which of the two to prefer, if both cannot be held, is left to you to determine. The Fort at Wheeling I am told is essential, could we spare men to garrison it. But I fear an attempt to leave too many posts occupied in your Rear, would weaken the Body with which you move up the River so much, that it would not answer the purposes expected from it. I can only therefore give you this general direction, to leave no more posts than are absolutely necessary to secure the communication, and no more men at them than are absolutely necessary to defend them. Hasten the water-Craft by all means, that you may not have to wait for them, when other matters are ready. The Garrisons of these

small posts should consist of the Independent Companies that your larger Corps may be kept as compact and compleat as possible. Should the Companies not be fully sufficient for the purpose you are to call in Militia to their assistance. But let not this be done if it can be avoided, should the emergency of the case require it, let their number be as small as possible.

Neither the Indians nor any other persons are to know your destination, until your movement points out the probable quarter. Engage at a proper season as many warriors as you can to accompany you, and at all events procure good Guides, who know the Way from the head of the navigation of Allegany to the nearest Indian Towns and to Niagara. After you have moved, let it remain a secret, as long as possible, to which you are going. You are to inform me with precision, and by a careful express, when you will be ready to begin your movement from Fort Pitt, when you can be at Kittaning, when at Venango, when at the head of the navigation, how far it is from thence to the nearest Indian Towns, and when you can reach them. In making your estimate of the times, you are to calculate upon moving as light as possible, and with only a few pieces of the lightest artillery. These are necessary for me to know, with as much accuracy as possible, that the plan of coöperation, upon which much depends, may be perfectly formed.

I would wish you to pacify and cultivate the friendship of the Western Indians, by all the means in your

power. When you are ready to move, and your probable destination can be no longer concealed, contrive ways to inform them, that you are going to meet a large force, to fall upon and destroy the whole Country of the Six Nations; and that, if they do in the mean time give the least disturbance to the frontiers, *that* whole force will be turned against them; and that we will never rest, till we have cut them off from the face of the Earth. There is one point upon which I will take the liberty of dropping you a caution, though perhaps it may already have struck you; which is, the policy and propriety of not interesting yourself in the dispute subsisting between the States of Pennsylvania and Virginia, on account of their boundaries. I would wish you to recommend unanimity for the present to all parties; and, if they endeavor to make you an umpire in their affairs, I would have you waive it, as not coming properly before me in my military capacity. This impartial line of conduct will command the respect of both parties, whereas a contrary one would constantly produce discontent and ill-will in those disappointed by the decision. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
25 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have been duly favored with your obliging letters of the 1st and 8th instant with their enclosures. your answers to the several queries stated in mine

of the 11th of February are very satisfactory, and so far as my information through other channels extends, it corresponds in most particulars with what you communicate.

If the main body to be employed on the expedition were to proceed by way of the Mohock River, the route and plan you have marked out would be preferable to any other. The reasons for which you recommend the principal operation to be carried on this way are weighty; but there are some considerations, which upon the whole, determine me to send the main body by way of the Susquehannah. This plan, I think will save both time and expence; give greater security to the troops and make the success more certain. I hope too it will not be less effectual. I agree with you that the Seneca settlements ought to be the capital object. The rout by the Mohock River appears rather circuitous for the purpose. It enters at one extremity very remote from the principal point of attack. The difficulty and expence of conveying the troops and the necessary supplies would be increased not only from the greater extent to be traversed, but from the greater diversity of land and water carriage. I find also from a comparison of intelligence that the navigation of the Mohock river and through Wood Creek would be more slow and troublesome than up the Susquehanna. A greater number of posts of communication must be established which would diminish the operating force so much the more. But the chief objection I have to the measure is, that I should be under no small apprehension from the enemy's force in Canada.

It is true we are endeavoring by demonstrations of an expedition into that province to induce them to keep their force at home—and with a view to this, as well as the jealousies which have been given on the side of Lake Champlain—I have been trying to create others by the way of Co'os; Though I hope these expedients will have the effect intended; yet we cannot sufficiently rely upon their success. The enemy's intelligence of our resources and movements may be such as to apprize them of our real design. In that case should they send a detachment towards Oswego, to co-operate with the indians and their garrisons on the lakes; we should be in a very delicate situation. By uniting to oppose our progress in the first instance, we should have to encounter a force perhaps too formidable; or which is more to be dreaded, should they suffer us to proceed till we had passed the Onondaga River and then fall down into our rear, we should be in danger of being intercepted, our communication cut off no convoys, if we stood in need of them could follow. If we should turn back to dislodge the party in our rear it would occasion delay and so soon as we resumed our March forward they would resume their position, and oblige us either to repeat the same retrogradation or advance and risk the consequences. To advance we ought to calculate upon the possibility of a defeat and a defeat under these circumstances would be ruinous. The route by Susquehanna appears to be more direct—more easy and expeditious and much more secure. Very little is to be apprehended for our retreat in any event that may happen. The result of my inquiries in

several ways is—that there is a very practicable navigation for boats of 8 or ten tons burthen all the way from Sunbury to Tioga about 140 miles, (interrupted with only three or four rapids) and for smaller boats as far as Shemung about 18 miles beyond Tioga on the Cayuga branch and for canoes ten miles above that. That the distance from Shemung to the heart of the Seneca settlements is not above 60 or 70 miles through an open and travelled country very susceptible of the passage of a body of troops, with Artillery and Stores. In order to be certain of the navigation of the river at all times, in its driest and shallowest state as well as in the season of its greatest depth, instead of boats of the size above mentioned, I have directed boats to be constructed of only three or four tons burthen. You will perceive that if my information be good you have misunderstood the navigation of Susquehannah an unfavorable opinion of which, seems to have concurred in determining your preference to the other route.

The supply of a body of troops going this way will be much easier and cheaper than by the Mohock River. The flour for their use will be as it were on the spot; whereas in the latter case from the scarcity on the North River and Eastwards all the flour consumed in the expedition must be replaced by a long land transportation, from the Southward. The additional expence and trouble of this would be very considerable; which though it is secondary is a powerful motive for sending the main body by the Susquehannah.

The plan I have in contemplation to divide the force into three parts, the principal one consistg. of about 300 to go by way of Susquehannah and penetrate immediately into the Seneca settlements—of about 1000 composed chiefly of the New York Regiments to enter the Indian country on the left by the Mohawk River and the other of about 500 to attack them on the right by way of the Ohio and Allegeni River—These three bodies to co-operate as punctually, as circumstances will permit. The main body and the one by Ohio, may easily form a junction in the Seneca country. The other must move with caution and secure itself as it goes. These different attacks will distract and terrify the Indians, and I hope facilitate our project. It is also to be hoped in their confusion, they may neglect in some places to remove the Old men women children and that these will fall into our hands. If they attempt to defend their country, we may gain some decisive advantage, if not we must content ourselves with distressing them as much as possible, by destroying their villages and this year's crop. The places of rendezvous for the different corps will be Wyoming—the Mohawk River (perhaps the German flats) & Pittsburgh—

With respect to an attempt to surprise the Onondaga and Cayuga tribes in the way you first suggested, it would hardly suit—with the force to be employed according to the present plan in that quarter—and though a thing of this kind would be very desireable I should be cautious of risking much upon it—or making

arrangements for it that would be attended with extra expence or trouble. Unless by small parties and in a sudden way, I should esteem it difficult to effect a surprise upon an enemy so vigilant and desultory as the Indians. But I very much approve your project for surprising the Onondaga capital village by a party from Fort Schuyler. It has a good prospect of success will be of great importance if it does succeed and not much is put to the hazard—in the attempt. I shall be obliged to you to take measures accordingly.

Every days experience exhibits our finances in a more unpromising light and inforces the necessity of economy in our public expenditures. The enormous amount of preparations that cannot be avoided discourages me from adding to it by any scheme the execution of which is contingent and apparently remote. Though much attached to the idea of extending our preparations for operating to the Northward, beyond the limits of our immediate views, I find it indispensible to contract them to this standard. I must therefore with great reluctance, request that no expence may be in future incurred not essential to the execution of the present plan. On a supposition, that the providing plank for the 20 Gun ship will be far advanced before this comes to hand—I shall make this an exception & let it be completed.

I shall be much obliged to you to endeavor to ascertain the distance from Fort Schuyler, or any other given point on the Mohawk River to the Chenissio—Conasadago—Onondago and other castles—

also the distance by land from the German flats to those castles & to Niagara—whether there be any practicable route—what sort of an one it is—and the nature of the country, through which it passes.

With the truest &c.

P.S. I fully agree with you in the necessity of supplying the friendly Indians with provisions, and wish it to be done unless contradicted by Congress. In consequence of your information that a body of Indians were collecting as if with design to fall upon the Northern frontier, as I had it not in my power to spare a further reinforcement of troops—I transmitted copies of the letters to Governor Clinton, that he might endeavor to afford such assistance as he thought practicable & necessary.

TO GEORGE MASON.

MIDDLEBROOK, 27 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR:

* * * * * *

Though it is not in my power to devote much time to a private corrispondence owing to the multiplicity of public Letters & other business I have to read, write, & transact; yet, I can with great truth assure you that it would afford me very singular pleasure to be favored at all times with your sentiments in a leizure hour upon public matters of general concernment, as well as those which more immediately respect your own State, if proper conveyances would render prudent a free communication. I am particularly

desirous of it at this time because I view things very differently, I fear, from what the people in general do, who seem to think the contest is at an end, & to make money, and get places the only things now remaining to do. I have seen without despondency even for a momt.—the hours which America have stiled her gloomy ones, but I have beheld no day since the commencement of hostilities that I have thought her liberties in such eminent danger as at present.

Friends and Foes seem now to combine to pull down the goodly fabric we have hitherto been raising at the expense of so much time, blood, & treasure—& unless the bodies politic will exert themselves to bring things back to first principles—correct abuses—& punish our internal Foes inevitable ruin must follow,—indeed we seem to be verging so fast to destruction that I am filled with sensations to which I have been a stranger till within these three months.

Our Enemy, behold with exultation & joy, how effectually we labor for their benefit; and from being in a state of absolute despair, and on the point of evacuating America, are now on tiptoe—nothing therefore, in my judgement, can save us but a total reformation in our own conduct or some decisive turn to affairs in Europe. The former alas! to our shame be it spoken! is less likely to happen than the latter; as it is more consistent with the views of the speculators—various tribes of money makers & stock jobbers of all denominations to continue the War for their own private emolument without considering that their avarice & thirst for gain must plunge every thing, including themselves in one common ruin.

Were I to endulge my present feelings, & give a loose to that freedom of expression which my unreserved friendship for you would prompt me to, I should say a great deal on this subject.

But letters are liable to so many accidents, & the sentiments of men in office sought after by the enemy with so much avidity, & besides, conveying useful knowledge (if they get into their hands) for the superstructure of their plans, is often perverted to the wors[t] of purposes that I shall be somewhat reserved notwithstanding this letter goes by a private hand to Mount Vernon.—I cannot refrain lamenting, however, in the most poignant terms, the fatal policy too prevalent in most of the States of employing their ablest men at home in posts of honor or profit, till the great National Interest is fixed upon a solid basis.—To me, it appears no unjust simile to compare the affairs of this great Continent to the mechanism of a clock, each state representing some one or other of the smaller parts of it which they are endeavoring to put in fine order without considering how useless & unavailing their labor is unless the great Wheel, or Spring which is to set the whole in motion is also well attended to—& kept in good order—I allude to no particular state—nor do I mean to cast reflections upon any of them—nor ought I, it may be said to do so upon their representatives; but, as it is a fact too notorious to be concealed that C—— is rent by Party—that much business of a trifling nature & personal concernment withdraw their attention from matters of great national moment at this critical period.—When it is also known that idle-

ness & dissipation take place of close attention & application, a man who wishes well to the liberties of his Country and desires to see its rights established cannot avoid crying out where are our men of abilities? Why do they not come forth to save their Country? let this voice my dear Sir call upon you—Jefferson & others—do not from a mistaken opinion that we are about to set down under our own vine, & our own fig tree, let our hitherto noble struggle end in ignom'y —believe me when I tell you there is danger of it—I have pretty good reasons for thinking that Administration a little while ago had resolved to give the matter up, and negotiate a peace with us upon almost any terms; but I shall be much mistaken if they do not now from the present state of our currency dissentions & other circumstances push matters to the utmost extremity—nothing I am sure will prevent it but the interposition of Spain, & their disappointed hope from Russia.

I thank you most cordially for your kind offer of rendering me services. I shall without reserve, as heretofore, call upon you whenever instances occur that may require it, being with the sincerest regard, &c.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

MIDDLEBROOK, March 28th, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

The enemy have some enterprise in view. New London, on account of the Frigates in the river, and because Boats have been preparing at the East end of Long Island, and Troops for some time past draw-

ing thitherward, is supposed to be the object. Probably it is so; but, as the Season is now approaching when either negotiation or vigorous exertions must take place of inactivity, and as General Clinton doubtless will, in the latter case, and in pursuance of the predatory plan talked of by the minority and not disavowed by the administration, attempt something that will give eclat to his arms, I should not be much surprised if some vigorous effort was used against Annapolis, Baltimore, or even Philadelphia itself.[1] I do not mean with a view to hold either of these places, but to plunder or destroy them. General Clinton, (under pretence of visiting the Troops,) is now at the East end of long Island with Sir Willm. Erskine. Admiral Gambier is gone to Rhode Island; and one of my most intelligent correspondents informs me, that it is surmised that the Troops at that place are to be withdrawn. Transports with provisions have gone from New York to Rhode Island, and a number of privateers have been detained from their cruises and sent along with them.[2]

[1] "The keeping the coasts of the enemy constantly alarmed," wrote Lord George Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton, "the destroying of their ships and magazines, and by that means preventing the rebels becoming a formidable maritime power and obstructing the commerce of his Majesty's subjects, are objects of so much importance, that a war of this sort, carried on with spirit and humanity, would probably induce the rebellious provinces to return to their allegiance; at least, it would prevent their sending out that swarm of privateers, the success of which has enabled and encouraged the rebels to persevere in their revolt."—November 4, 1778.

[2] "When I had the Honor of addressing Your Excellency, on the 11th Instant, I transmitted some intelligence I had just received from General Maxwell, respecting Admiral Gambier's preparing to sail from New York, and suggesting New London to be the object of the expedition. How far events may justify this suggestion, I cannot determine; however, by advices which came to hand this evening from a correspondent, from whom I have my best

Upon the whole, I cannot help suspecting, that the preparations have been too long making, too formidable, and too open, for any enterprise against New London, for wch. place the fears of the people are up, and, as we cannot tell where it may fall, we should, as far as human prudence and the means in our hands will enable us, be guarded at all points. The sole purpose, therefore, of this Letter, is to suggest for your consideration the expediency of adopting, in time some general plan (without taking notice of the present suggestion, thereby creating probably unnecessary fears) for giving an alarm to the militia of the Country, and for fixing on places of rendezvous for them, that in cases of sudden emergency they may quickly assemble, free from tumult or disorder; for be assured, if any thing is attempted against the City of Philadelphia, the preparations for it will be held under the darkest veil, and the movement, when the plan is ripe for execution, will be rapid. As my motive to this suggestion is good, I will offer no apology for the freedom, but assure you that I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant.

intelligence, I am informed, that 16 transports with a flat-boat each, a sloop-of-war of 16 Guns, & 5 or 6 strong privateers, went up the Sound a few days ago with a view of joining the Scorpion & Thames of 20 guns. The advices also say, that the Admiral in a 64, with a sloop-of-war, sailed from the Hook about the same time, with a pilot acquainted with Long Island and the Sound, that the supposed design of the expedition is to take the Frigates at New London, and that their determination now is to plunder and distress the coast. There are accounts, besides these, that Troops have been drawing towards the east end of the Island, and some flat-boats building under the direction of Sir William Erskine. It is added, that General Clinton is gone there himself. General Putnam is apprized of these movements, but it will be impossible for us to prevent their descents in many instances."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 26 March, 1779.

TO JAMES WARREN, IN MASSACHUSETTS.

MIDDLEBROOK, 31 March, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I beseech you not to ascribe my delay in answering your obliging favor of the 16th of Decr. to disrespect, or want of inclination to continue a correspondence in which I have always taken pleasure & thought myself honored.

Your Letter came to my hands in Philadelphia, where I attended, at the request of Congress, to settle some important matters respecting the army & its future operations, and where I was detained until some time in Feby. During that period my time was so much occupied by the immediate & pressing business which carried me down, that I could attend to little else; & upon my return to camp I found the ordinary business of the army had run so much behindhand, that, together with the arrangements I had to carry into execution, no leizure was left me to indulge myself sooner in making the acknowledgment I am now about to do, of the pleasure I felt at finding that I still enjoyed a share of your confidence and esteem, and now & then am to be informed of it by letter. Believe me, Sir, when I add, that this proof of your holding me in remembrance is most acceptable and pleasing.

Our conflict is not likely to cease so soon as every good man would wish. The measure of iniquity is not yet filled; and, unless we can return a little more to first principles, and act a little more upon patriotic grounds, I do not know when it will, or what may be

the issue of the contest. Speculation, Peculation, Engrossing, forestalling, with all their concomitants, afford too many melancholy proofs of the decay of public virtue, and too glaring instances of its being the interest and desire of too many, who would wish to be thought friends, to continue the war. Nothing, I am convinced, but the depreciation of our currency, proceeding in a great measure from the foregoing causes, aided by stockjobbing and party dissensions, has fed the hopes of the Enemy and kept the B. arms in America to this day. They do not scruple to declare this themselves, and add, that we shall be our own conquerors. Cannot our common country, Ama., possess virtue enough to disappoint them? Is the paltry consideration of a little dirty pelf to individuals to be placed in competition with the essential rights and liberties of the present generation, and of millions yet unborn? Shall a few designing men, for their own aggrandizement, & to gratify their own avarice, overset the goodly fabric we have been rearing at the expense of so much time, blood, & treasure? And shall we at last become the victims of our own abominable lust of gain? Forbid it Heaven! Forbid it all & every State in the Union! by enacting & enforcing efficacious laws for checking the growth of these monstrous evils, & restoring matters in some degree to the pristine state they were in at the commencement of the war!

Our cause is noble. It is the cause of mankind, and the danger to it is to be apprehended from ourselves. Shall we slumber and sleep, then, while we

should be punishing those miscreants, who have brot. these troubles upon us, & who are aimg. to continue us in them; while we should be striving to fill our battalions, & devising ways and means to appreciate the currency, on the credit of wch. every thing depends? I hope not. Let vigorous measures be adopted; not to limit the prices of articles, for this I believe is inconsistent with the very nature of things, and impracticable in itself; but to punish speculators, forestallers, & extortioners, and above all to sink the money by heavy taxes, to promote public & private economy, Encourage manufactures &c. Measures of this sort, gone heartily into by the several States, would strike at once at the root of all our evils, & give the *coup de grace* to British hope of subjugating this continent, either by their arms or their arts. The first, as I have before observed, they acknowledge is unequal to the task; the latter I am sure will be so, if we are not lost to every thing that is good & virtuous.

A little time now must unfold in some degree the enemy's designs. Whether the state of affairs in Europe will permit them to augment their army with more than recruits for the Regiments now on the continent, and therewith make an active and vigorous campaign; or whether, with their Florida & Canadian force, they will aid & abet the Indians in ravaging our western Frontier, while their shipg. wh. detachments, harass, (and if they mean to prosecute the predatory war, threatened by the administration through their commissioners) burn, & destroy our

seacoast; or whether, contrary to expectation, they should be more disposed to negotiate than to either, is more than I can determine. The latter will depend very much upon their apprehensions from the court of Spain, & expectations of foreign aid & powerful alliances. At present we seem to be in a chaos. But this cannot last long, as I suppose the ultimate determination of the British court will be developed at the meeting of Parliament after the holydays. Mrs. Washington joins me in cordial wishes & best respects to Mrs. Warren. She would have done herself the pleasure of writing, but the present conveyance was sudden. I am, with sincere esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

DEAR SIR, MIDDLEBROOK, April 8th, 1779.

Your favor without a date, acknowledging the receipt of my letters of the 28th, & 9th ulto came to hand a day or two ago.

Colo. Patterson (as he is called) was a stranger even in name to me, till he came here introduced by Colo. Cox as a person capable of giving the best information of the Indian Country, between the Susquehannah and Niagara of any man that was to be met with; and as one who had it more in his power than any other to obtain such intelligence of the situation, numbers and designs of the enemy in these regions as I wanted to enable me to form the Expedition against them—In this light, & as the Brother-in-

law of Genl. Potter who is known to be a zealous friend to America, I viewed & imployed Colo. Patterson for the above purposes; concealing as much as the nature of the case would admit my real design.—If I have been deceived in the Man, Colo Cox is the author of the deception and is highly culpable, because he represented him to me as a person he was well acquainted with,—The Troops from Minisink were to begin their March for Wioming last Monday—The bad weather all the Month of March and an accident to one of my Letters to Genl. Hand occasioned a delay of some days. Orders also went (before the receipt of your Letter) to Genl. McDougall to put the remains of Patten's & Malcolm's Regiments in motion for the same quarter—and the Board of War, some time since, has been applied to for a relief to Rawling's Corps that it might reinforce Brodhead for the purpose mentioned to you when at Camp, but what they have done in the matter is unknown to me—I shall be very glad to know from time to time what progress is made in compleating the five independent Companies; and let me beseech you my dear Sir while I am upon the subject of recruiting to give the most pointed orders to those who are engaged in this Service, for your Battalions, to take no Deserters.—They weaken instead of strengthen the Regiments, and not only rob the public of the bounty money, arms, accoutrements and cloaths which they receive, but poison the minds of other Soldiers and carry many away with them to the enemy.—In Genl. Potter's letter (now returned) the propriety of offering

Land as an encouragement to Men to enlist in the above Companies, is suggested for your consideration —I have long been of opinion founded in observation that if the State bounties are continually increased for every short & temperary Service & enlistment, that the price of Men another year will be far above our purchase; & a final end will be put to recruiting; —the consequences of which, under present appearances, are well worthy of consideration.

To hear that all party disputes had subsided & that harmony (not only between Congress & the States but between the discordant parts of the State) was restored, wd. give me very singular pleasure.—If party matters were at an end, & some happy expedient hit upon to check the further depreciation of our money, we should soon be left to the enjoyment of that Peace and happiness which every good man must wish for & none but the viciated & abandoned tribe of speculators, &c would be injured by.[1]

If propositions have not been made to Congress of the Court of G. Britain for negotiating a Peace on the terms which have been held out to the Commissioners upon what ground is the resolutions you speak of founded? They surely do not mean to be the movers of a Negotiation, before they know the terms that will be offered, or which can certainly be obtained?—In a word the whole matter (to me) is a mistery.—I am, &c.

[1] The draft of this letter, in Washington's own hand, contained the following paragraph, struck out by the pen: "I am clearly in sentiment with you, that Congress ought to be left totally unembarrassed by the interference of particular States, even if negotiation is actively begun, or proposed on the part of Great Britain. But if it should not, the resolutions you speak of are not only unseasonable, but pernicious in the extreme."

April 9th. *P. S.*—Since writing the foregoing I have spoke to Genl. Greene concerning Patterson—He says that Cox is not, nor was not unacquainted with the suspicions harbored of him—that in ye early part of the War he got disgusted by some disappointment, withdrew from Public Service—& has conducted himself in such a manner as to be suspected of favoring the back Settlers who have joined the Enemy—but nevertheless he will answer for his fidelity & the due performance of what he has undertaken if impediments are not thrown in his way.—

I have accts of the marching of Pattens and Malcolm's Regiments—& that the Troops from Minisink will be at Wioming this night if no accident happens to them.

TO JOHN JAY.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
14 April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your several favours of the 2d, 3d, & 28th of March, & 6th of April. I thank you for them all, but especially for the last, which I consider as a distinguishing mark of your confidence & friendship.[1] Conscious that it is the aim of my actions to

[1] *Philadelphia*, April 6th.—"Mr. Jay presents his compliments to General Washington, and encloses an extract from a letter in a certain degree interesting."

General Gates to the President of Congress.—"The enclosed copy of my letter to General Washington of the 4th instant, in answer to his of the 14th ultimo from Middlebrook, will give Congress a true idea of my opinion respecting our entering Canada, and the only route we can take with reasonable hopes of success. Individuals and not the public will be benefited by an expedition into Canada, by either of the routes from Albany. That of Coos alone is

promote the public good, and that no part of my conduct is influenced by personal enmity to individuals, I cannot be insensible to the artifices employed by some men to prejudice me in the public esteem. The circumstance, of which you have obliged me with the communication, is among a number of other instances of the unfriendly views, which have governed a certain gentleman from a very early period. Some of these have been too notorious not to have come to your knowledge. Others, from the manner in which they have been conveyed to me, will probably never be known, except to a very few. But you have perhaps heard enough, and observed enough yourself, to make any further explanation from me unnecessary.

The desire, however, which is natural I should feel to preserve the good opinion of men of sense and virtue, conspiring with my wish to cultivate your friendship in particular, induces me to trouble you with a state of some facts, which will serve to place the present attack in its proper light. In doing this, I shall recapitulate and bring into one view a series of transactions, many of which have been known to you, but some of which may possibly have escaped your memory.

An opinion prevailing that the enemy were like shortly to evacuate these States, I was naturally led to turn my thoughts to a plan of operation against Canada,

practicable, but not without the coöperation of the allied fleet. General Washington's letter of the 14th of February is enclosed. It being the only letter I have received from his Excellency since December, Congress will immediately judge of the extent or limitation, which it is proper to observe in their instructions to me."—March 15th.

in case that event should take place. A winter campaign, before the enemy could have an opportunity of reinforcing and putting themselves in a more perfect state of defence, appeared to promise the most certain and speedy success, the route by Coos offered itself as most direct and practicable. In this I fully agreed with General Gates and some other gentlemen, whom I consulted on the occasion ; and, on ye 12th of September last, I wrote to Congress *accordingly*, submitting it to them, whether it would be advisable to be laying up magazines, opening a road, and making other preparations for the undertaking. They approved the project, and authorized me to carry it into execution. I the more readily entered into it, from a consideration, that, if circumstances should not permit us to carry on the enterprise, the preparations towards it could easily be converted into another channel, and made serviceable to our operations elsewhere, without any material addition of expense to the *continent.* Because provisions, which would compose the principal part of the expense, were, at all events, to be purchased on Connecticut River, the only doubt being whether it should be used in an Expedition against Canada or transported to Boston, circumstances to determine this. With truth it may be added, that, excepting the articles of provisions and forage, which, as before observed, would have been bot. if no Expedn. by the way of Coos had been in contemplation, the "*incredible* expense," mentioned by Genl. Gates in his letter of Mar. 4th, amounted to the purchase of a few pairs of Snow-Shoes and some

leather for moccasins *only*. If any other expense has been incurred, it is unknown to me, must have been by his order, and he alone answerable for it.

In October following, Congress entered into arrangements with the Marquis de Lafayette for co-operating with the court of France, in an expedition against that country. In this scheme, one body of troops was to proceed from Coos and penetrate by way of the River St. Francis; others, forming a junction at Niagara, were to enter Canada by that route; and, while these were operating in this manner, a French fleet and a body of french troops were to go up the river St. Lawrence and take possession of Quebec. You are well acquainted with the opposition I gave to this plan, and my reasons at large for it. From what has since happened, they seem to have met the full approbation of Congress. The ideas I held up were principally these; that we ought not to enter in any contract with a foreign power, unless we were sure we should be able to fulfill our engagements; that it was uncertain whether the enemy would quit the States or not; and in case they did not, it would be impracticable to furnish the aids which we had stipulated; that, even if they should leave us, it was very doubtful whether our resources would be equal to the supplies required; that, therefore, it would be impolitic to hazard a contract of the kind, and better to remain at liberty to act as future conjunctures should point out. I recommended, nevertheless, as there were powerful reasons to hope the enemy might go away, that eventual preparations should be made to take

advantage of it, to possess ourselves of Niagara and other posts in that quarter for the security of our frontiers, and to carry our views still farther, with respect to a conquest of Canada, if we should find ourselves able to prosecute such an enterprise. This, Congress, in a subsequent resolve, approved and directed to be done. It was not *the least* motive with me for recommending it, that operations of this nature seemed to be a very favorite object with that honorable body. The preparations on Hudson's River were undertaken in consequence.

Upon a nearer view of our finances and resources, and when it came to be decided, that the enemy would continue for some time longer to hold the posts they were in possession of; in the course of the conferences with which I was honored by the committee of Congress in Philadelphia, I suggested my doubts of the propriety of continuing our northern preparations upon so extensive a plan, as was at first determined. The committee were of opinion with me, that the state of our currency and supplies in general would oblige us to act on the defensive next campaign, except so far as related to an expedition into the Indian country for chastising the savages and preventing their depredations on our back settlements; and that, though it would be extremely desirable to be prepared for pushing our operations further, yet our necessities, exacting a system of economy, forbade our launching into much extra expense for objects, which were remote and contingent. This determination having taken place, all our northern preparations were discontinued, except

such as were necessary towards the intended Indian expedition.

Things were in this situation, when I received a letter from General Bayley, (living at Coos,) expressing some fears for the safety of the magazine at Coos, in consequence of which I directed the stores to be removed lower down the country. This I did to prevent a possibility of accident, though I did not apprehend they were in much danger. Some time afterwards, I received the letter No. 1, from General Gates, expressing similar fears; to which I returned him the answer of the 14th of February transmitted by him to Congress, No. 2. Knowing that preparations had been making at Albany, and unacquainted with their true design, he very precipitately concluded from a vague expression in that letter, that the intention of attacking Canada was still adhered to, but that I had changed the plan and was going by way of Lake Champlain or Ontario. Either of these routes he pronounces impracticable, and represents that by Coos as the only practicable one. He goes still further, and declares, that "in the present state of our army, and the actual situation of our magazines, to attempt a serious invasion of Canada, by whatever route, would prove unsuccessful, unless the fleet of our allies should at the same time coöperate with us by sailing up the river St. Lawrence." Though I differ with him as to the *impracticability* of both the other routes, I venture to go a step beyond him respecting our ability to invade Canada, & am convinced, that, in our present circumstances, and with the enemy in front, we cannot under-

take a serious invasion of that country at all, even with the aid of an *allied fleet.* You will perceive, Sir, that I have uniformly made the departure of the enemy from these States *an essential condition* to the invasion of Canada; and that General Gates has entirely mistaken my intentions. Hoping that I had embarked in a scheme, which our situation would not justify, he eagerly seizes the opportunity of exposing my supposed errors to Congress; and, in the excess of his intemperate zeal to injure me, exhibits himself in a point of view, from which I imagine he will derive little credit. The decency of the terms in which he undertakes to arraign my conduct, both to myself and to Congress, and the propriety of the hasty appeal he has made, will, I believe, appear at least questionable to every man of sense and delicacy.

The last paragraph of the extract, with which you favor me, is a pretty remarkable one. I shall make no comments further, than as it implies a charge of neglect on my part, in not writing to him but once since December. From the beginning of last campaign to the middle of December, about seven months, I have copies of near fifty letters to him, and about forty originals from him. I think it will be acknowledged, that the correspondence was frequent enough during that period; and, if it has not continued in the same proportion since, the only reason was, that the season of the year, the troops being in Winter-quarters, and Genl. G's situation unfruitful of events and unproductive of any military arrangements be-

tween us, afforded very little matter for epistolary intercourse; and I flatter myself it will be readily believed, that I am sufficiently occupied with the necessary business of my station, and have no need of increasing it by multiplying letters without an object. If you were to peruse, my Dear Sir, the letters which have passed between General Gates and myself for a long time back, you would be sensible that I have no great temptation to court his correspondence, when the transacting of public business does not require it. An air of design, a want of candor in many instances, and even of politeness, give no very inviting complexion to the correspondence on his part. As a specimen of this, I send you a few letters and extracts, which, at your leisure, I should be glad that you would cast your eye upon.

Last fall, it was for some time strongly suspected that the enemy would transport the whole or the greater part of their force Eastward, and combine one great land and sea operation against the french fleet in Boston harbour. On this supposition, as I should go in person to Boston, the command next in importance was the posts on the North River. This properly would devolve on General Gates; but, from motives of peculiar scrupulousness, as there had been a difference between us, I thought it best to know whether it was agreeable to him, before I directed his continuance. By way of compliment, I wrote him a letter, containing No. 3, expecting a cordial answer and cheerful acceptance. I received the evasive and

unsatisfactory reply,[1] No. 4. A few days after this, upon another occasion, I wrote him the letter, No. 5, to which I received the extraordinary answer, No. 6, which was passed over in silence.

The plan of operations for the campaign being determined, a commanding officer was to be appointed

[1] The following extracts from the letters here referred to were copied, and sent to the President of Congress with the above letter.

General Washington to General Gates.—"There is a point, which I wish to mention to you, and I shall be glad if it coincides with your own inclination. If the movements of the enemy make it necessary for the main body of the army to proceed to the eastward, there will still remain a considerable command for the defence and security of the Highland posts. This, from several resolutions of Congress heretofore upon the subject, and from several other considerations, it seems to me, will be proper for you. It will and must extend to the forces employed above, and on the frontier of this State; and I am persuaded that it will be agreeable to the views and wishes of Congress. But if this could not be supposed to be the case, there is another circumstance which appears to render your remaining in this department extremely necessary. This State, I am authorized to say, dislikes General Putnam, and, not reposing confidence in him, will be uneasy if he should be left in command."—September 26, 1778.

General Gates' Reply.—"From the beginning of the war, I devoted myself to the service of the United States; and while I continue to serve, I shall cheerfully obey all orders from Congress, your Excellency, or any of my superior officers. Your Excellency has, therefore, only to signify your commands, to have them instantly obeyed."—September 27th.

General Washington wrote again on the 30th of September, giving an account of the manner in which the different parts of the army were stationed, and of the attack on Baylor's regiment.

General Gates' Reply.—"I am sorry for the disgrace we have suffered in the Jerseys, but imagine the enemy take advantage of the supineness, that constantly seizes upon our people, when they have been long unmolested. This is an evil, which even the best officers cannot remedy. Your Excellency will excuse me, when I say, I like not the divided state of your army. The enemy are on the *qui vive*. They have the advantage of a river to navigate upon each of our flanks. To divide is to conquer, in politics; I hope it may not, with regard to us, prove so in war. I hope Lord Stirling and General Maxwell will answer all your Excellency's expectations in the Jerseys. They certainly are best acquainted with that quarter."—September 30th.

for the Indian expedition. This command, according to all present appearances, will probably be of the second if not of the first importance for the campaign. The officer conducting it has a flattering prospect of acquiring more credit, than can be expected by any other this year; and he has the best reason to hope for success. General Lee, from his situation, was out of the question; General Schuyler (who, by the way, would have been most agreeable to me) was so uncertain of continuing in the army, that I could not appoint him; General Putnam I need not mention. I therefore made the offer of it, for the appointmt. could no longer be delayed, to General Gates, who was next in seniority, though, perhaps I might have avoided it, if I had been so disposed, from his being in a command by the special appointment of Congress. My letter to him on the occasion, you will find in No. 7, I believe you will think was conceived in very candid and polite terms, and that it merited a different answer from the one given to it,[1] No. 8.

I discovered very early in the war symptoms of coldness & constraint in General Gates' behavior to me. These increased as he rose into greater consequence; but we did not come to a direct breach, till the beginning of last year. This was occasioned by a correspondence, which I thought rather made free with me, between Generals Gates and Conway, which accidentally came to my knowledge. The particulars of this affair you will find

[1] Dated March 6th and 16th. See above, pp. 354.

delineated in the packet herewith, endorsed "Papers respecting General Conway." Besides the evidence, contained in them, of the genuineness of the offensive correspondence, I have other proofs still more convincing, which, having been given me in a confidential way, I am not at liberty to impart.

After this affair subsided, I made a point of treating Gen. Gates with all the attention and cordiality in my power, as well from a sincere desire of harmony, as from an unwillingness to give any cause of triumph to our enemies, from an appearance of dissension among ourselves. I can appeal to the world, and to the whole army, whether I have not cautiously avoided every word or hint, that could tend to disparage Gen. Gates in any way. I am sorry his conduct to me has not been equally generous, and that he is continually giving me fresh proofs of malevolence and opposition. It will not be doing him injustice to say, that, besides the little, underhand intrigues which he is frequently practising, there has hardly been any great military question, in which his advice has been asked, that it has not been given in an equivocal and designing manner, apparently calculated to afford him an oppotunity of censuring me, on the failure of whatever measures might be adopted.

When I find that this gentleman does not scruple to take the most unfair advantages of me, I am under a necessity of explaining his conduct to justify my own. This, and the perfect confidence I have in you, have occasioned me to trouble you with so free a com-

munication of the state of things between us. I shall still be as passive as a regard to my own character will permit. I am, however, uneasy, as General G. has endeavored to impress Congress with an unfavorable idea of me; and, as I only know this in a private, confidential way, that I cannot take any step to remove the impression, if it should be made.

I am aware, Sir, of the delicacy of your situation; and I mean this letter only for your own private information. You will, therefore, not allow yourself to be embarrassed by its contents, but with respect to me pass it over in silence. With the truest esteem and personal regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

P. S. General Gates in his letter of the 30th of Septr. disapproves the divided state of our army—what he says being in general terms might seem plausible enough, but by no means applies to the case in hand. The Army was then in four divisions—Three Brigades of the right wing & one from the second line under General Putnam had been stationed in the Highlands in conjunction with the garrison of West Point for the immediate defence of the passes there—The remaining two brigades of that wing, under Baron de Kalb was incamped on Fish Kill

[1] In regard to Gates' letter to Congress, Mr. Jay wrote: "The impression attempted to be made has not taken. It passed without a single remark. Your friends thought it merited nothing but silence and neglect. The same reason induced me to take notice of it in my answer. I have perused the several papers with which you favored me. The delicacy, candor, and temper diffused through your letters, form a strong contrast to the evasions and designs observable in some others. Gratitude ought to have attached a certain gentleman to the friend who raised him; a spurious ambition, however, has, it seems, made him your enemy."—April 21st.

plains, 7 or 8 miles from the town within less than a days march of the fort.—At Fredericksburgh was three brigades of the second line under Lord Stirling about two days march from the fort—General Gates with the left wing of five brigades was at Danbury abt. 14 miles from Fredericksburgh. The manœuvring on our flanks of which General Gates speaks by way of the North River or the sound must have had for object either the Highland passes, or the army itself.—Had they attempted those passes, the force immediately on the spot & close in its vicinity was sufficient from the nature of the ground to withstand their whole force; and the rest of the army from the time necessarily exhausted in military operations would in all probability have been up in time to succour that part—Without gaining those passes they could not get at the army at all on the right; and in doing it, if they could have effected it, the army would have had abundant time to collect & defend itself.—To advance by land in our front would have been chimerical; they would have had a much greater distance to approach us, than the whole distance from one extremity of our force to the other; and we should have had all the leisure we could desire to assemble at any point we thought proper. Had they attempted our left flank at Danbury by way of the sound, we might either if we had judged it expedient have brought up the other corps to support the one there, or, if it found itself pressed for want of time, it had only to fall back upon Fredericksburgh, and there our whole force would have concentred with

ease to oppose the enemy to the greatest advantage. The truth was, there was not at that time the least probability they should attempt an army which had been the whole summer inviting them out of their stronghold—nor did I think there was much, they would molest the forts;—yet it would certainly have been imprudent to have risked the security of either. —When the enemy was in the Jerseys the change then made in the disposition gave still greater security to the different objects for which we had to provide, by drawing a greater force to the point threatened. The intention of the disposition I have described was to push a part of our force as far Eastward as possible for the aid and protection of the French fleet, in case the enemy had directed their force against that, at the same time, I did not choose to lose sight of the North river, and therefore kept a sufficient force near enough to secure it. The conciliating these two objects produced that division of our army of which General Gates complains. No man however was more vehement in supposing the French fleet would be the object of the enemy's operations than himself; and this he so emphatically inculcated in several of his letters, that I thought it necessary in answer to one of the 6th of October, to write him as contained in mine of the 7th, both which are also herewith No. 9 & 10.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
19 April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I am to thank you for your two favors of the 3d and 8th with their inclosures—I am happy to find,

that you agree with me in preferring the route by Susquehannah.

In prosecuting the consideration of the Indian expedition and upon a still nearer view of our force and supplies, a doubt arises respecting the best manner of employing the troops now on the Northern frontier—whether to let them penetrate on the left flank of the enemy by way of the Mohock River or to make them form a junction, by way of Otsego lake with the main body at Tioga, Owegy or some other convenient place on the upper part of the Susquehannah.

The arguments for operating on the first plan are these: The troops going different ways will distract and perplex the enemy and keep awake different jealousies, and the body by the Mohock River will create an advantageous diversion in favor of the main body. It will also give cover and protection to the Northwestern frontiers, against which, if the enemy find they are not able to oppose the advances of our main body, they may think it advisable to direct their force to retaliate the damage we are doing to their settlements. By advancing too, in different directions, into the Indian country, the business of destroying their settlements can be carried on with more expedition and efficacy.

On the other hand, it may be said, that by dividing our force we diminish the confidence with which our operations might otherwise be carried on, and expose either party to the greater danger of a defeat from the collective force of the enemy—that the body moving by the Mohock River must either move with

so much caution as to afford less effectual aid to the main body, or by operating with greater boldness and celerity, must expose itself immediately to the hazard of being cut off—and that the distance the two bodies will be from each other and the obstacles to a free communication of intelligence will make it infinitely difficult so to regulate their movements, as to produce a proper co-operation which is essential to make the one useful to the other—The scarcity of provisions in the Northern district is an additional reason for carrying the expedition wholly by way of Susquehannah, where the necessary supplies can be most easily furnished; the general expence of acting in one body will be less than that of acting in two different quarters.

A further reason also may be this—I shall not be able, without risking the main army in a manner that could not be justified, to spare hence a sufficient number of Continental troops to compose the main body intirely—I have therefore called upon the State of Pennsylvania for an aid of 600 militia to be employed on the expedition. If she should not be able to furnish them, either the main body must be weaker than could be wished, or it must be strengthened by the addition of the troops from the northward.

By the enclosed letter to General Clinton left open for your perusal, you will perceive that I have directed him to have the several corps mentioned therein held in readiness to assemble by the 12th of May at Conajoharie—with a sufficient number of batteaus and carriages for their transportation also

to have a large supply of provisions laid up at Fort Schuyler, either for the use of these troops, should they move by the Mohock River or should they go the other way, for the more effectual support of the garrison of Fort Schuyler—You will see what further directions, I have given him, and that I have referred him to you for advice and assistance. The rendezvous at Conajoharie will point both ways.

I shall be much obliged to you for your opinion on the two plans I have suggested—I really find myself in a good deal of hesitation which to prefer.

You will observe that agreeable to your ideas for the security of the Northern frontier I have applied to Governor Clinton for a body of militia, to relieve the detachments on Hudsons River.

I have no map of the kind you mention, and shall thank you for the one you so obligingly offer.

Permit me to assure you, my Dear Sir, that I extremely regret your continuance in the Army still remains undecided. It will afford me the truest pleasure if your affair should ultimately take such a turn as will enable me to avail myself of your assistance and the public to derive the benefit of your future services in the field. With the greatest esteem &c.[1]

[1] General Clinton had received a letter from General Haldimand, dated at Quebec on the 26th of May, expressing great apprehensions that an attack on Canada was meditated, as batteaux were building near Skenesborough, and he feared small parties would cross the line and unite in the heart of the country. His whole amount of forces, from Lake Ontario to Quebec, he said, did not exceed sixteen hundred regular British troops, and upon the greatest emergency he could not assemble more than one thousand men. He added, that since the war with France there had been a change in the disposition of

TO COLONEL DANIEL BRODHEAD.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLE BROOK,
21st April, 1779.

DR. SIR,

Since my last letter, and upon a further consideration of the subject, I have relinquished the idea of attempting a co-operation between the troops at Fort Pitt and the bodies moving from other quarters against the Six Nations. The difficulty of providing supplies in time, a want of satisfactory information of the route and nature of the country up the Alleghany River, & between that & the Indian Settlemts., and consequently the uncertainty of being able to co-operate to advantage, and the hazard which the smaller party might run, for want of a co-operation, are principal motives for declining of it. The danger to which the frontier would be exposed, by drawing off the troops from their present position, from the incursions of the more western tribes, is an additional though a less powerful reason. The post at Tusca-

the Canadians, that the Germans were unfit by nature and education for the American service, that they had been necessarily dispersed at small posts, and had thus in some degree imbibed the spirit of the inhabitants, and that frequent desertions had taken place. In this state of things he thought a reinforcement of two thousand men absolutely necessary to ensure the safety of Canada. Sir Henry Clinton proposed to send them as soon as a convoy could be procured.

These facts show that General Washington's feint, in ordering batteaux to be built near Lake Champlain and other preparations to be made at Coos, with the design of diverting General Haldimand's attention from the western expedition, had been effectual. It was moreover the means of drawing away two thousand of General Clinton's force from New York. General Washington supposed the force in Canada to be much larger than it proves to have been by General Haldimand's letter, and formed his plans upon that supposition. Spies had been employed there during the winter, but their reports were contradictory and uncertain.

rora is therefore to be preserved, if under a full consideration of circumstances it is judged a post of importance, and can be maintained without running too great risk, and the troops in general under your command are disposed in the manner best calculated to cover and protect the country on a defensive plan.

As it is my wish, however, as soon as it may be in our power, to chastise the western savages by an expedition into their country, you will employ yourself in the mean time in making preparation, and forming competent magazines of Provisions for the purpose. If the expedition against the Six Nations is successfully ended, a part of the troops employed in this will probably be sent, in conjunction with those under you, to carry on another that way. You will endeavor to obtain in the mean time and transmit to me every kind of intelligence, which will be necessary to direct our operations, as precise, full, and authentic as possible. Among other points, you will try to ascertain the most favorable season for an enterprise against Detroit. The Frozen season, in the opinion of most, is the only one in which any capital stroke can be given, as the enemy can derive no benefit from their shipping, which must either be destroyed or fall into our hands. I am, &c.

TO BURWELL BASSETT.

CAMP AT MIDDLEBROOK,
22 April, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your favor of the 30th Ulto. which is the only letter I recollect to have had from you these many months.—

Thinking that Jack Custis and his Manager Posey, would have more leizure on their hands than might fall to your lot, I desired the former sometime ago to ease you of as much trouble as he could on my acct; but to advise with, & consult you in whatever he did relative to my business—As he has left that part of the country I must request the favor of you to give Mr. Posey such directions as you think best for the completion of my affairs on York River.—The inclosed letter to him (left open for your perusal) is to this effect.—Davenport's reason for not carrying the Tobo. to the Warehouse is truly excellent—and yet if one had a mind to be ill natured it might be asked why he would prize Tobacco that he thought unfit for market? He & Hill has, I believe, divided the profits of my Estate on the York River, tolerably well betwn. them for the devil of any thing do I get; but why need I dwell upon or trouble myself much about trifles, when to speak within bounds, ten thousand pounds will not compensate the losses I might have avoided by being at home, & attending a little to my own concerns. I am now receiving a shilling in the pound in discharge of Bonds which ought to have been paid me, & would have been realized before I left Virginia, but for my indulgences to the debtors.

We have nothing new or important in this quarter except the imbarkation of Nine Regiments at New York; but for what service they are destined is uncertain, though generally believed to be for Georgia.

It is most devoutly to be wished that the several States would adopt some vigorous measures for the purpose of giving credit to the paper currency and punishment of speculators, forestallers and others who are preying upon the vitals of this great Country and putting every thing to the utmost hazard. Alas! what is virtue come to—what a miserable change has four years produced in the temper & dispositions of the Sons of America! It really shocks me to think of it!

My best respects and good wishes are offered to all our friends & with sincere truth. I am, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

HEAD QUARTERS, MIDDLE BROOK,
22d April, 1779.

DR. SIR,

The enclosed is a letter to you in your official character. This you will be pleased to receive as private and confidential, to explain for your own satisfaction the reasons, which will oblige me to draw off Maxwell's brigade from its present position, and will prevent my replacing them by other troops.

I have for a long time past been preparing for a decisive expedition against the Six Nations, which is now approaching fast to the period fixed for its execution. The short term of service for which the militia can be drawn out, by the laws of the different States, concurring with other obvious reasons, has deter-

mined me to employ on this service almost wholly Continental troops. The force of the savages, with the aid they may derive from the British garrisons on the lakes, makes it necessary, in order to give a sufficient probability of success to the undertaking, to detach so considerable a force from this quarter, as will leave the main army rather in a delicate situation. To provide for its security as far as possible, I shall be under a necessity of keeping it in a collected state; and this will of course oblige me to afford less cover to the country, than has been done for some time past, till our numbers can be rendered more respectable by the accession of the levies, which I hope will be raised in the different States towards completing their battalions. It is very disagreeable to me to throw any burthen upon the militia at this season of the year; but you will readily perceive, my dear Sir, that it is not in my power to avoid it.

You will also perceive, that I mean to withdraw the Monmouth Detachment. An additional motive for it is, that the enemy appear to have a number of active emissaries in that part of the country, who have been very successful in corrupting our men. An alarming spirit of mutiny and desertion has shown itself upon several occasions, and there is no saying how extensively the infection might spread. Sensible as you will be of the importance of keeping our true situation a profound secret to the enemy, I am persuaded you will make a cautious use of what I now communicate. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO JOHN JAY.

MIDDLEBROOK, April 23d, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

In one of your former letters you intimate, that a free communication of sentiments will not be displeasing to you. If, under this sanction, I should step beyond the line you would wish to draw, and suggest ideas, or ask questions, which are improper to be answered, you have only to pass them by in silence. I wish you to be convinced, that I do not desire to pry into measures, the knowledge of which is not necessary for my government as an executive officer, or the premature discovery of which might be prejudicial to the plans in contemplation.

After premising this, I beg leave to ask, what are the reasons for keeping the Continental frigates in port? If it is because hands cannot be obtained to man them, on the present encouragement, some other plan ought to be adopted to make them useful. Had not Congress better lend them to Commanders of known bravery and capacity for a limited term, at the expiration of which, the vessels, if not taken or lost, to revert to the States; they and their crews, in the mean time, enjoying the exclusive benefit of all captures they make, but acting, either singly or conjointly, under the direction of Congress? If this or a similar plan could be fallen upon, comprehending the whole number under some common head, a man of ability and authority, commissioned to act as commodore or admiral, I think great advantages would result from it. I am not sure but at this moment, by such a col-

lection of the naval force we have, all the British armed vessels and transports in Georgia might be taken or destroyed, and their troops ruined. Upon the present system, our ships are not only very expensive and totally useless in port, but sometimes require a land force to protect them, as happened lately at New London.[1]

The rumor of the camp is, that Monsieur Gerard is about to return to France. Some speak confidently of its taking place. If this be a fact, the motives doubtless are powerful; as it will open a wide field for speculation, and give our enemies, whether with or without real cause, at least a handle for misrepresentation and triumph. Will Congress suffer the Bermudian vessels, which are said to have arrived in Delaware and Chesapeake Bay, to exchange their salt for flour, as is reported to be their intention? Will they not rather order them to depart immediately? Indulging them with a supply of provisions at this time will be injurious to us in two respects; it will deprive us of what we really stand in need of for ourselves, and will contribute to the support of that swarm of privateers, which resort to Bermudas, whence they infest our coast, and in a manner annihilate our trade.

[1] The marine affairs of the United States were under the charge of a committee, consisting of a delegate from each State. It was of course fluctuating, as new members were constantly added, in the place of those who had resigned or retired from Congress. Thus there was neither consistency nor a system of action. Very few of the members had any knowledge of naval concerns. Party views and local interests contributed to divide the counsels of the Board, and to prevent the adoption of efficient and beneficial measures. These facts are enough to account for any irregularities and want of method and energy in that department.—*Jay to Washington*, 26 April, 1779.

Besides these considerations, by withholding a supply, we throw many additional mouths upon the enemy's magazine, and increase proportionably their distress. They will not and cannot let their people starve.

In the last place, though first in importance, I shall ask; is there any thing doing, or that can be done, to restore the credit of our currency? The depreciation of it is got to so alarming a point, that a wagon-load of money will scarcely purchase a wagon-load of provisions. I repeat, what I before observed, that I do not wish for your reply to more of these matters, than you can touch with strict propriety. Very truly, I am, &c.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLE BROOK,
27 April, 1779.

SIR,

In a line of yesterday, as I did not think it proper to detain the express and delay the notice then given, till I could prepare a more explicit answer, I only briefly acknowledged the receipt of your two letters in Council of the 24th and 25th instant, to which I should have added that of the 26th. I am now to enter into a particular consideration of their contents, and to offer such explanations as may seem necessary to satisfy any doubts, which the honorable the Council may entertain on the subjects they respectively discuss.

The first relates wholly to the trial of Major-Genera. Arnold. It is with concern I observe, that the Council

appear to have misconceived the intention of the notification contained in my letter of the 20th, and to imagine that I had taken up the matter in a different point of view from that in which it is considered by Congress and by themselves, placing them in the light of a party in the prosecution.[1] I flatter myself on a revisal of my letter, and of the resolve of Congress on which it is founded, this opinion will be readily retracted. The resolve, of which the enclosed is a copy, directs me to appoint "a Court-Martial for the trial of General Arnold, on the first, second, third, and fifth articles contained in the resolves of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania, and to notify them of it, with

[1] *To Joseph Reed*, April 20th.—"I have, in obedience to a resolve of Congress, directed a court-martial to be held in this camp, on the 1st of May next, for the trial of Major-General Arnold, on the first, second, third, and fifth charges exhibited against him by the Supreme Executive Council of the State of Pennsylvania. You will therefore be pleased to furnish the court, at the above time, with the proper evidence in support of the charges."

In reply the Council said, that they apprehended some mistake on the part of Congress in the mode of transmitting the business to General Washington; that they had exhibited no *charges* against General Arnold, except that of appropriating the public wagons of the State to his private use; and that they did not think it consistent with the duty they owed to the State to be considered in the light of a party in the trial. They further said, that, in their representations to Congress, they only intended to express an opinion of General Arnold's conduct, and to specify the points in which they thought him censurable; that their understanding of the matter was, from a conference between the joint committees of Congress and the Council, that the papers relating to the subject, with the names of the witnesses, were to be sent to the Commander-in-chief, and that the attendance of the witnesses would then be procured, either by his authority or by the order of Congress. The Council approved the trial, because they believed General Arnold's conduct deserved some military reprehension, but at the same time they rejected the idea of being regarded as a party in the prosecution. They also considered the time allowed before the assembling of the court to be much too short, as two of the principal witnesses had gone to Carolina, and another (Col. Fitzgerald) was supposed to be in Virginia.—*President Reed's MS. Letter*, April 24th.

a request, that they would furnish the evidence to the court." My letter was intended as a simple compliance with this order, and accordingly informs, that I had directed a court to be held at this camp, on the 1st of May next, for the trial of Major-General Arnold, on the 1. 2. 3 and 5th charges exhibited against him by the Council, requesting that they would be pleased to furnish the court at the appointed time with the proper evidence in support of the charges. The terms of this letter were such as, in common speaking, naturally presented themselves to express what was intended; because the charges there said to be exhibited by the Council, though in their present form they are instituted by the authority of Congress, originated in the resolves of council, of which they compose a part. But if they contain any ambiguity, or seem to imply more than those of the resolve, it is entirely to be ascribed to inadvertence and to a want of precision. It will easily be seen, that they could not be meant to convey the idea supposed, when it is recollected to be a fundamental maxim in our military trials, that the Judge-advocate prosecutes in the name and in behalf of The United States. But, as it is customary and reasonable, for those who exhibit informations, on which charges are founded, to produce or point out the witnesses necessary to support them, and enable public justice to operate; on this principle, I presume, Congress directed the notification, which has been made, and in the same spirit it was my intention to convey it. Further than this I had no idea of considering the Council as a party.

My motives for appointing the trial to take place at so short a period were these. The season is fast advancing, when we shall be under a necessity of taking the field; and as it is at most times very inconvenient (in the present state of the army impracticable) to spare a sufficient number of officers of high rank to compose a court at a distance from camp, and almost equally so to be carrying on a long and perhaps complicated trial in the midst of the operations of a campaign, it was my wish to bring it on at once, in hopes it might be concluded before they began. This was one reason, and to me a weighty one. Another was, that General Arnold had written to me in a very pressing manner, requesting the trial might commence as soon as possible. Uninformed of the particular circumstances, which might require delay, and considering it as my duty to accelerate the execution of justice, as well to the public, in case of real guilt, as to the individual, if innocent, I could have no objection to complying with his request. As the affair had been a considerable time in agitation, and I took it for granted the Council were acquainted with the order of Congress for appointing a court, I concluded the witnesses would be prepared, and that little time was necessary to collect them. The remoteness of the persons alluded to, I could not foresee. The affair of the two officers is entirely new to me; nor did it ever occur to my mind as probable, that the gentlemen, whom I conjecture to be hinted at, were intended to be summoned as witnesses on the side of the prosecution.[1]

[1] Clarkson and Franks, who were with the Southern army.

I can assure the Council, with the greatest truth, that "substantial justice, not a mere formality, will undoubtedly be my object on this occasion." I shall endeavor to act, and I wish to be considered, merely as a public executive officer, alike unbiassed by personal favor or resentment, and having no other end in view, than a faithful, ingenuous discharge of his duty. To obviate the remotest appearance of a different disposition, as well as to give the freest operation to truth, I have determined to defer the trial till the 1st of June, if it is thought the most material witnesses can be produced by that time, or till the 1st of July, if it is deemed necessary to await the arrival of the two officers from Carolina.

I am therefore to request of the Council information on this head, and that they will be pleased to point out, without delay, the persons who are to be called as witnesses in the affair. Where my authority will produce their attendance, it is my duty to exercise it; where I have no right to order, I can only request; but where any citizens of the State of Pensylvania are concerned, I doubt not the Council will employ its influence and authority to induce their appearance.

As to the officers, who may compose the Court-Martial, I trust the respectability of their characters will put their honor and impartiality out of the reach of suspicion. The expense of Witnesses, as the prosecution is in behalf of the United States, I take it for granted will be borne by them. Whether it will be possible for the Court to sit at or near Philadelphia depends upon circumstances, which cannot now be foreseen; at this time it could not by any

means be done; if it can be done hereafter, without prejudice to the service, it will be very agreeable to me. The mode of conducting the trial will be strictly conformable to the orders of Congress, and to the sentiments I have now expressed; and I hope will not be thought in any degree to deviate from the respect due to the Council.

It gives me much pain to find, by your letter of the 26th that there is not a better prospect of aid from the Militia of your State in the intended Indian expedition. The drawing out the militia into service will no doubt interfere with the culture of the lands, and it were to be wished that it could be avoided. But the reduced state of our regiments, and the little apparent probability of augmenting them, will not allow me to prosecute a vigorous offensive operation to the Westward, wholly with Continental troops, without weakening the main army so much, as to put every thing to hazard this way. Influenced by considerations of this nature, I applied to your State for six hundred men; to New York for an indeterminate number, which has voted one thousand to be employed on the frontier also; and to New Jersey to replace, as far as was thought proper, the Continental troops now stationed on the coast, which will of necessity be withdrawn. If these applications have not the desired effect, bad as the consequences may be, I can only wish what I am unable to accomplish, and regret what it is not in my power to prevent.[1]

[1] "The misfortunes which have happened along the coast since withdrawing the guards are such as in our present circumstances we cannot prevent, if it

Notwithstanding the cautious terms in which the idea is conveyed, I beg leave to express my sensibility to the suggestion contained, not only in your letter of the 25th, but in a former one, of the ——, that the frontier of Pensylvania is left unguarded and exposed, while that of some other States is covered and protected. Nor can I be less affected by the manner of the application for stationary troops, in case the proposed expedition should be laid aside; an event, which I could hardly have thought supposable. I am not conscious of the least partiality to one State, or neglect of another. If any one have cause to complain of the latter, it is Virginia, whose wide extended frontier has had no cover, but from troops more immediately beneficial to the Southwestern part of Pensylvania, which, besides this, has had its northern frontier covered by Spencer's, Pulaski's and Armand's corps; its middle, by Hartley's and some independent companies. That these troops were unequal to the task is not to be denied, nor that a greater number was sent at the

is to be done by parties from the Army;—To cover a sea coast of 1500 miles from the enemy's vessels; and our western frontiers of the same extent from Indian incursions, is impracticable; and yet I am called upon every hour to do it.—The levies designed to fill up the quotas of the respective States, are raising but slowly if at all—Some of them are ordered on remote service—while at the same time large detachments are making from the main Army to different parts. These things render it impossible to give that attention to the Coast which we could wish, and at the same moment secure the main force from defeat or insult, and protect those posts which are of the last importance to the common safety and communication. Measures must therefore be taken by the several States for their defence, or the prevention of petty inroads of the enemy, by proper guards of militia, till our situation will permit us to give them assistance from the Army."—*Washington to Major-General Putnam*, 14 May, 1779.

close of last campaign to the western frontier of New York. But, for the first, the scantiness of our means is a sufficient reason. If the abilities and resources of the States cannot furnish a more competent force, assailable as we are on all sides, they will surely be more just than to expect from the army protection at every point. As to the last, those troops were not sent to be stationary. The repeated accounts transmitted by Congress, and received from other quarters, of the ravages actually committed, and the still greater threatened upon the western frontier of that State, occasioned so considerable a detachment, with a view to some offensive operations in the Winter. But these, through unforeseen impediments, we were obliged to lay aside. All these troops, except the garrison of fort Schuyler, are now destined for the Indian expedition, and are preparing for it.

I have been thus particular from a scrupulous desire to show, that no part of my conduct indicates a predilection to one State more than to another; but that, as far as the means in my hands will extend, I aim equally at the security and welfare of all. This is only to be obtained by vigorous exertions, and, in the present case, these must depend on the aid which the States most interested will give. I am &c.

The Council are pleased to intimate an application from Bermudas for a supply of flour. I am glad to find they do not seem disposed to comply with it— In my opinion it cannot be done without serious injury to the Service. Not only we appear to want

all of that article which the Country can spare for our own use; but by withholding it from the enemy, we shall distress their privateers, which are the bane of our Commerce, not a little. This I have reason to believe from the best authority has already happened from the embargo's which have been laid upon that article; and it would seem hardly politic to remove the difficulty. No doubt a great part of what might be furnished would be applied in this way—Besides these considerations, by withholding a supply, we throw many additional Mouths upon the enemys Magazines, and increase proportionably their distress —they will not—they cannot let their People starve. With great &c.

TO MONSIEUR GERARD, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY FROM HIS MOST CHRISTIAN MAJESTY TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

HD.-QRS., MIDDLEBROOK, May 1st, 1779.

SIR,

As you have been pleased to honor me with a communication of His Excellency Count d'Estaing's intention of returning to this continent, with the squadron under his command, and have desired to know my sentiments of the manner in which this event may be best improved for the interest of the common cause, and what can be done on the part of these States towards that end, I beg leave to offer the following as the definite result of my reflections on this subject, without recapitulating the particular

reasons on which it is founded, and which have been already detailed in our several conferences.

I consider it as an essential basis to any extensive combined operations between the Squadron of His most Christian Majesty and the troops of these States, that the former shall possess, and have a good prospect of preserving, a clear superiority over the British naval force in America. In this case, if explicit assurances can be given, that His Excellency Count d'Estaing will proceed with all despatch directly from Martinique to New York, so as to arrive there in all probability before the British fleet under Admiral Byron; with the permission and approbation of Congress, I will engage to relinquish all the present projects of the campaign, and collect our whole force in this quarter, with all the aid which can be derived from the militia of the neighboring States, to coöperate with the Squadron of His Most Christian Majesty for the reduction of the enemy's Fleet and army at New York, Rhode Island, and their dependencies.

I make this offer from a persuasion, that we should be able to collect a sufficient force to give a reasonable prospect of success to an enterprise decisive in its nature; and I request explicit assurances of a coöperation in the manner proposed, because without them I could not be justified in abandoning measures and engagements, in which the security of these States is deeply concerned, and because a failure would be attended with the most serious mischiefs. If these assurances cannot be given, the plan, which then

appears to me most eligible, is this. That His Excellency Count d'Estaing proceed with his squadron immediately to Georgia, where, in conjunction with the American troops, there is every reason to believe he would with great facility capture and destroy the enemy's fleet and army; which they could only elude in part, and that not without great difficulty, by a precipitate retreat to St. Augustine; and, even in this case, their vessels and stores would inevitably fall. That he next proceed directly from Georgia to New York, where, if he arrives before Admiral Byron, by entering the harbor expeditiously he will be sure of taking or destroying all their fleet in that port. The troops on Staten Island might also, I conceive, be intercepted and taken; the French troops in the fleet landing on one part, and a detachment from our army at another. Successes of this kind might open a new field of action, and lead to other important events. On the arrival of the fleet at the Hook, if a few frigates could be spared to be despatched to Rhode Island, to capture and destroy their vessels and obstruct their retreat, it would answer a very important end.

Either of these plans being pursued, if attended with important successes, so as to disembarrass these States of the whole or the principal part of the enemy's force now within them, would put it in their power to coöperate with the forces of his most Christian Majesty in prosecuting such offensive enterprises against the enemy elsewhere, as shall be deemed advancive of the honor and interest of the

allied powers; which cannot be expected while the immediate internal safety of the States is endangered by formidable fleets and armies, requiring the exertion of all their strength and resources in their own defence.

Having done myself the honor to submit to Your Excellency my ideas of the operations, which may be adopted with the greatest prospect of mutual advantage in the event you have been pleased to suggest, I doubt not, if either of the plans be approved wholly or in part, your answer will enable me to determine with precision the line of conduct, which ought to govern my operations relatively, to the objects they comprehend. I have the honor to be, with the most perfect respect, and the greatest personal esteem, &c.[1]

[1] M. Gerard was now on a visit to the camp, to which place he had come to consult General Washington respecting the operations of Count d'Estaing's fleet. In consequence of the suggestions of Congress on this subject, M. Gerard had written to Count d'Estaing, then in the West Indies, proposing a combined expedition against Georgia, and such other operations on the American seaboard as circumstances should point out. Count d'Estaing replied, that he expected to be on the coast of Carolina by the end of May, and to proceed thence to the Delaware River. It was his design to attack Halifax, and afterwards Newfoundland, if provisions and a sufficient number of men could be furnished by the United States. M. Gerard consulted the President of Congress and two or three members before he went to camp. The question was frankly discussed by General Washington, but he was satisfied the plan could not succeed. It was impossible for him to spare troops for such an expedition from the small army with which he was obliged to defend the country against the English on one side and the savages on the other. The English had eleven thousand men in New York, and five thousand at Rhode Island. Militia could not be relied on for an enterprise like that meditated against Halifax, and regular troops could not be supplied without abandoning the plan of the campaign and leaving the country exposed.—*MS. Letter from M. Gerard to Count Vergennes*, May 6th.

As there was little probability, that Count d'Estaing would maintain a superiority over the British fleet in the American seas, the plan of a combined

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
3d May, 1779.

SIR,

I was duly honored with your Excellency's letter of the 28th of last month with its enclosure to which proper attention shall be paid.

I enclose you extracts from some letters lately

attack upon New York was likewise given up. It was finally agreed, that Count d'Estaing should make an effort to succor Georgia and Carolina, and should then sail to the mouth of the Delaware, and pursue such ulterior operations as should be concerted between him and Congress for the greatest advantage of the United States. In writing to Congress on the subject, M. Gerard said: "The underwritten makes no doubt, that this new proof of his Majesty's generous and disinterested friendship will fortify that confidence, which his engagements and his conduct ought to have inspired in the people of America. Facts so evident will serve on the other hand to confound those evil-minded persons, who, by absurd and clandestine insinuations, void not only of all proof, but of all probability, and directed only by private views and clearly opposed to the honor and interest of the confederated republic, endeavor to sow doubts and jealousies, of which the common enemy alone will reap the fruits."—May 9th.

When Congress received the letter from the Minister of France, stating the purposes of Count d'Estaing, it was resolved, "that a copy of it be transmitted to General Washington, and that he consider himself at liberty so to direct the military operations of these States, as shall appear to him most expedient."—*Journals*, May 10th. In communicating these very extensive powers, the President added: "Congress confide fully in your Excellency's prudence and abilities; and I am directed to signify to you their wish, that neither an undue degree of delicacy nor diffidence may lead you to place too little reliance on your own judgment, or persuade you to make any further communications of your designs than are necessary, or high expedience may dictate."

While M. Gerard was in camp, he wrote to Count Vergennes: "I have had many conversations with General Washington, some of which have continued for three hours. It is impossible for me briefly to communicate the fund of intelligence, which I have derived from him, but I shall do it in my letters as occasions shall present themselves. I will now say only, that I have formed as high an opinion of the powers of his mind, his moderation, his patriotism, and his virtues, as I had before from common report conceived of his military talents and of the incalculable services he has rendered to his country."—*MS. Letter*, May 4th.

received from General Schuyler, which are interesting in their nature, and require immediate direction. They are rather of a remote date, having been long in coming to hand. Congress will perceive that some of the hostile tribes of Indians, the Cayugas in particular, are desirous of making peace with us, and that it will be necessary to give our Commissioners instructions on this subject. I am inclined to think, in our present situation, it may be politic enough to make a partial peace with some of the tribes, though I should not wish to see it extended to the whole, even if their inclination, prompted by their fears, should lead them to solicit it; of which however there is no present appearance. A disposition to peace in these people can only be ascribed to an apprehension of danger, and would last no longer than till it was over, and an opportunity offered to resume their hostility with safety and success. This makes it necessary that we should endeavor to punish them severely for what has passed, and by an example of rigor intimidate them in future. But by confining this to those nations, who are most formidable and mischievous, the end will be answered, and, by detaching a part from the confederacy, we shall lessen the force we have to combat, add perhaps to our own, and make the stroke intended more easy and certain. This policy seems the more eligible, from the account given of the detachment, which is designed to be sent from Canada to the Westward. This is a measure I have all along dreaded, and, to prevent it if possible, have employed every artifice

I could think of to excite jealousies of an invasion of Canada, and induce the Enemy there to keep their force at home. I have directed that effectual measures may be taken to ascertain the intelligence of the Western reinforcement. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
4 MAY, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have received the honor of your two letters both of the 1st instant.

I have generally been so happy as to agree with your Excellency in sentiment on public measures; but an instance now occurs, in which there happens to be a difference of opinion. I am extremely apprehensive that very disagreeable consequences may result from an increase of the standing pay of the militia. It would create an additional cause of discontent to the soldiery, who would naturally draw a comparison between their situation and that of the militia, and would think it very hard and unjust, that *these* should receive for temporary services a greater reward than *they* for permanent ones. This would occasion disgust and desertion, if not mutiny, among those already in the army, and would be a new discouragement to others from entering into it. The only remedy would be, to augment the pay of the soldiery to an equal sum, and the like must be done

[1] Read in Congress, May 7th.

in the other States for their militia. The addition of Public expense would then be excessive; and the decay of our credit and currency proportional.

Your Excellency will agree with me, that every step should be carefully avoided, which has a tendency to dissatisfy the army, already too little pleased with its condition, and to weaken our military establishment already too feeble, and requiring every prop our circumstances will afford to keep it from falling into ruin. I should imagine the militia of the country are to be drawn out by the authority of the government, rather than by the pecuniary reward attached to their service; if the former is not sufficient, the latter, I apprehend, will be found ineffectual. To make the compensation given to the militia an inducement of material weight, it must be raised so high, as to bear a proportion to what they might obtain by their labor in their civil occupations; and in our case to do this, it must be raised so high as, I fear, to exceed the utmost stretch of our finances. But if it is thought indispensable to increase emoluments of service, in order to bring out the militia, it will be best to do it by a bounty rather than a fixed monthly pay. This would not be quite so palpable, nor strike the minds of the army with the same degree of force. But even this is a delicate point; and I have uniformly thought the large bounties, which have been given in the State enlistments and to militia, have been a very fertile source of evils and an almost irreparable injury to the service.

I have taken the liberty to communicate my senti-

ments on this subject with great freedom to your Excellency, as it appears to me a matter of extreme importance; and as I have the most entire confidence in your candor and friendship. If my objections do not appear valid, you will at least ascribe them to their proper motives. I shall, agreeable to your Excellency's wish, continue the troops or the principal part of them at their present stations, as long as it can be done without interfering with the main object. * * * I have the honor, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
5th May, 1779.

SIR,

Enclosed I have the honor to transmit your Excellency three New York papers of the 28th & 29th of April and 1st of May, which I think are interesting. The last contains extracts from Lord North's speech at opening the budget, which seems to breathe a vigorous prosecution of the war. I have thought appearances for some time past wore this complexion. The English papers have frequently announced considerable reinforcements to the army in America, and have even specified the particular corps intended to be sent over. Nor can I see any sufficient reason to believe this will not be done. While the government can procure money, men will not be wanting; and while the nation is unengaged in a Continental war in Europe, and can maintain a balance of naval power, I do not perceive why it should not be able to spare

men to continue the war in this country. At least the probability that they will be able to do it is great enough to demand very vigorous efforts on our part, to put the army upon a much more respectable footing than it now is. It does not really appear to me, that adequate exertions are making in the several States to complete their battalions. I hope this may not proceed in part from the expectation of peace having taken too deep root of late in this country.

I beg leave to submit it to Congress, whether a private, pointed address on this subject from them to the respective Legislatures may not be productive of a good purpose. I imagine it is unnecessary for me to particularize the situation of the army in the present reduced state of the regiments, after we shall have made the large detachment, which will be indispensable for the Western expedition, and considering that all the Virginia Levies are of necessity to be sent to the Southward.—I doubt not they are convinced it is such, as to demand the most serious exertions to make it better. With the greatest respect and esteem, I am, &c.[1]

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON.

HEAD QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
5 May, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR;

Your favor of the 8th of Feby. arrived safe, by Colo. Mead, abt. the 10th of Apl.—It conveyed to me a two fold pleasure—1st to hear that you were

[1] Read in Congress, May 8th. Referred to the committee appointed to prepare an address to the several States, to which are added Mr. S. Adams and Mr. Burke.

ready to obey the call of your Country in a representation of it; and 2dly that you could do it with more ease and convenience to your affairs than formerly.—

If time would permit, and it was proper and safe by the Post to go into a free discussion of the political state of our affairs, I could and would write you a very long letter on this subject. But this kind of conveyance is too uncertain (while the enemy are pursuing with avidity every means in their power to come at the sentiments of men in office,) to hazard such opinions as I could wish to convey; I shall only remark therefore that no day passes without some proofs of the justness of the observations contained in my letter to you by Colo Mead, and the necessity of the measure there recommended—if it is much longer neglected, I shall not scruple to add that our affairs are irretrievably lost!

I see no cause to retract a single sentiment contained in that long letter, but many very many alarming proofs in confirmation of the truth of them—if the letter therefore is in being, you are possessed as fully of my ideas on the several matters there touched as I have words to express them, and may allow them such weight as you think they deserve. An instance in proof of one of my positions I may give, because it is a fact of such notoriety that to the enemy, and to ourselves it is equally well known: it is, that Beef in the Market of Phila. is from ten to 15/ a pound, and other things in proportion; Country produce and imported Goods are equally dear. Under these cir-

cumstances, and no appearances that I can see of a radical cure, it is not difficult to predict the fate of our Paper Money, and with it a general Crash of all things.[1]

The measures of Ministry are taken; and the whole strength and resources of the Kingdom will be exerted against us this Campaign; while we have been either slumbering and sleeping or disputing upon trifles, contenting ourselves with laughing at the impotence of G. Britain, which we supposed to be on her knees, begging mercy of us and forgiveness for past offences, instead of devising ways and means to recruit our Battalions, provide supplies, and improving our finances, thereby providing against the worst and a very possible contingency.

Accounts from London to the 9th of March have fixed me in the opinion that G. Britain will strain every nerve to distress us this Campaign, but where or in what manner her principal force will be employed I cannot determine. That a pretty considerable number of Troops will be sent from G.

[1] "You give an affecting summary of the causes of the national evils we feel, and the still greater we have reason to apprehend. To me it appears that our affairs are in a very delicate situation; and what is not the least to be lamented is, that many people think they are in a very flourishing way, and seem in a great measure insensible to the danger with which we are threatened if Britain should be able to make a vigorous campaign in America this summer, in the present depreciation of our money, scantiness of supplies, want of virtue and want of exertion, tis hard to say what may be the consequence. It is a melancholy consideration that any concerned in the conduct of public affairs should discover an indifference to the state of our currency. Nothing, in my opinion, can be more manifest, than that if some thing effectual be not done to restore its credit, it will in a short time either cease to circulate altogether, or circulate so feebly as to be utterly incapable of drawing out the resources of the country. This is nearly the case now."—*Washington to John Jay*, 10 May, 1779.

Britain does not, I think, admit of a doubt, but whether for the West Indies, Georgia, or New York, or partly to all three, time must unfold. My own opinion of the matter is that they will keep a respectable force at the last mentioned place, and push their operations vigorously to the Southward, where we are most vulnerable and least able to afford succor. By extracts from the English Papers of the 4th of March it appears pretty evident that Seven Regiments, besides two of the New raised Scotch Corps, Recruits for the Guards, and other Regits. now in America, were upon the point of embarking; the whole, it is said, would amount to 12 or 13,000 Men. A Bill has passed both Houses of Parliament obliging each parish in the Kingdom to furnish two Men, by which, it is said, 27,000 will be raised. With this augmentation and her fleets, which are more than a match for the Naval strength of France *alone*, she may, circumstanced as we are, give a very unfavorable turn to that pleasing slumber we have been in for the last eight months, and which has produc'd nothing but dreams of Peace and Independence—if Spain can be kept quiet. To effect which, there is no doubt but that all the art and address of the Ministry will be displayed, and with too much success, it is to be feared, as it will be difficult upon any political ground (I am capable of investigating,) to account for the backwardness of that Court, if it means to take an active part, as the Fleet of France and Independence of America are hazarded by the delay.

From present appearances, I have not the smallest doubt but that we shall be hard pushed in every quarter. This campaign will be *grand*, and if unsuccessful, more than probably the *last* struggle of G. Britain; how much then does it behoove us to be prepar'd at all points to avert their intended blows. They are raising all the Indians from North to South that their arts and their money can procure, and a powerful diversion they will make in this quarter, with the aid expected from Canada. They have already begun their depredations. Under this view of things, which I believe is not exagerated, and the probability of the enemy's operating to the Southward out of supporting distance of this Army, would it not be good policy in the State of Virginia to extend their views to the necessary and effectual support of their Southern neighbors? The slow, ineffectual, and expensive modes ordinarily used to draw out the Militia, is ruinous in ye extreme, on account of the enormous expence which is incurred in the consumption of Provisions and stores, to say nothing of the useless time which they are paid for in coming, going, and waiting for each other, at any given point or place of rendezvous, or the injuries which agriculture and manufactures sustain. I know too little of the policy, energy, and situation of your government to hazard a clear opinion on the propriety, or practicability of any measure adequate to this end; nor do I know upon what footing your minute men, which existed at the commencement of the dispute, were put (as the establishment of them

happened after I left Virginia); but it appears to me that if a certain proportion of the Militia of each County are enrolled under this description, properly officered by men who had seen service and know how to train them, and were inform'd that they were to be first called to service, it might prove a very happy resource. If the proportion which shall be agreed on cannot be obtained voluntarily from ye Militia, let the private perform ye duty by rotation. These are but crude ideas, and will, in case they should merit notice at all, require time and consideration to digest them to system and order. My forebodings may lead me too far; but apprehensive as I am on account of the situation of Southern States, I shall hope to stand excused for this freedom of thought, especially as I am convinced that Militia which can only be drawn out for short, limited periods, can afford no effectual aid, while they ruin us in expence.

Little did I expect when I begun this letter, that I should have spun it out to this length, or that I should have run into such freedom of sentiment; but I have been led on insensibly, and therefore shall not haggle at the mention of one thing which I am desirous to touch upon, it is with respect to the treatment of the Convention troops, now in Virginia. No man in the early part of this War wished more than I did to soften the hardships of captivity by seeing the enemy's Officers, prisoners with us, treated with every mark of humanity, civility, and respect.[1] But such

[1] It is curious that on one point the British Minister should speak in almost precisely the same language as General Washington, though with an opposite

invariable proofs of ungrateful returns, from an opinion that all your civilities are ye result of fear; such incessant endeavors, maugre all their paroles, to poison the minds of those around them; such arts and address to accomplish this, by magnifying the power of G. Britain to some, her favorable disposition to others, and combining the two arguments to a third set; that I cannot help looking upon them as dangerous guests in the bowels of our Country, and apprehending a good deal from the hospitality and unsuspicious temper of my Countrymen, the more indulged they are, the more indulgencies they will require, and more pernicious they grow under them; and I am much mistaken if those who pay most attention to them do not find the greatest cause for repentance. I view General Phillips in the light of a dangerous man. In his march to Charlottesville he was guilty of a very great breach of military propriety, nay—of a procedure highly criminal; for instead of pursuing the route pointed out to him, namely the one by which the Troops of Convention marched through Leesburg, Orange, &ca., he struck down to George Town in Maryland, from thence went by water to Alexandria (taking as I am told the soundings of the River as he went), and from thence to Fredericksburg. True it is, that the officer who conducted him was more culpable than he;

application. Lord George Germaine said, in writing to General Clinton: "The rebels have hitherto made the most ungrateful returns for that lenity, which from principles of humanity has been too indiscriminately shown towards them, and, instead of being grateful for indulgences, they have always imputed lenity to fear, and the remission of punishment to the dread of retaliation."—November 9, 1780.

but upon enquiry it is found that this officer is a person over whom I have no controul as he is a prisoner of theirs. I only mention these things in proof of the necessity of keeping a watchful eye upon these officers. And let me add, if you think you gain by the apparent desertion of the men I can assure you you are deceived; we are every day apprehending these People in their attempts to get into New York. In a word, I had such good ground to suspect that under pretence of desertion numbers of them intended to get into New York, that I was induced to march parallel with them as they pass'd thro' N. York and Jersey, and post guards at proper places to intercept them; notwithstanding which, numbers, aided by the Tories who kept them concealed in the Mountains and obscure places, effected a junction with the enemy in the City.—Above all things, suffer them not to engage in your service as Soldiers, for so sure as they do, so sure do they rob you of your bounty and arms, and more than probably carry a man or two along with them to ye enemy.

I have already informed you that the Indians have begun their depredations on the Frontiers, and I have the pleasure to add, that we are endeavoring to pay them in their own Coin. About a fortnight ago, I sent 500 Men against the Onondago settlement, which they destroyed with their Provisions and ammunition, killed 12 of them (and their Horses and Cattle)—took 34 prisoners, 100 stand of Arms, and did them other damage without the loss of a Man. This with what may follow, will, it is to be hoped, be attended with salutary effects.

The enemy have been busily employed some days in preparing nine Regiments for Imbarkation, but for what Service they are intended is uncertain—most likely Georgia, No measures are taking by any of the States to compleat their Battalions; none at least that promises success, except in Virginia where the measure was set about in time. I leave you under this relation and these circumstances to draw your own conclusions, & am with every sentiment of regard and affectn. Yrs. &c.

P. S. *May* 7th. This letter will go by Colo Spotswood to Fredg. instead of the Post—I have this instant received advice of the sailing of the Troops mentioned above (as preparing to imbark), their number said to be 4000. I have ordered all the Virginia levies to be form'd into 3 Regiments, and marched under the command of Gen'l Scott immediately for Georgia. Officers are going from Camp to take charge of them. Bland's and Baylor's Regiments will, I believe, also be sent thither; but if the Troops here mentioned are destined for the Southward more aid must be sent to our Army; or South Carolina will soon be added to Georgia.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL MAXWELL.

HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
6 May, 1779.

* * * * * *

I inclose you answers to the questions, which you will put into the hands of your Spy. He may be instructed to say, that he sent the questions to a

friend of his near this camp, and received from him the answers. This occurs to me as the most eligible plan. However you will judge yourself on the occasion—I think you had better have them copied in an indifferent hand, preserving the bad spelling at the same time. * * * I am &c—

QUESTIONS.

No. 1. Where is Mr. Washington and what number of men has he with him.

No. 2. What number of cannon has Mr. Washington with him and what general officers.—

No. 3. Whether there is to be a draft of the militia to join Mr. Washington & how the inhabitants like it—

No. 4—Whether there is any discontent among the soldiers—

No. 5. Whether the inhabitants would resort to the King's standard provided a post was taken in Jersey and civil government established,

No. 6. Your Account of the Situation of the army with every other matter you can collect.

REPLIES.

1st. Cant tell the number exactly—some says eight thosand and very knowing hands ten thosand. I dont think he has 8000 with himself, besides the Jersey brigade, and another brigade which I hear is at Paramus.

Gen: Washington keeps head quarters at Mrs. Wallis's house four miles from Bandbrook.

2d. There is about sixty cannon in the parke at Plukemin, and not more than 8 or 10 with his troops at Bandbrook camp. The general officers is General Starling and Gen : Greene (Gen : Howe is at Philadelphia I am told and coming on to camp) Genl. de Kalbee, and Gen. Stubun French generals—Gen: Sullivan (General Gates I hear is ordered here) Genl. Woodford, Gen. Mulimburg, Smallwood, Gist and one Genl. McIntosh.

3d. The militia all ready to come out when signals is fired,

which is pleaced up in all places in Jersey. They seem very angry with the British and curse them for keeping on the war Many of them brag that the wold take revenge if they could get but a good opportunity, and General Washington to back them.

4th. I cant say theres much discontent among the sodgers, tho' their Money is so bad. They get plenty of provisions, and have got better cloes now than ever they had. They are very well off only for hatts. They give them a good deal of rum and whiskey, and this I suppose helps with the lies their officers are always telling them to keep up their spirits.

five. The people talk much as they used to do—Some seem to get tired of the war—But the rebels seem to have a great spite against our friends and want to get their estates.—I have heard some of these say—they would be glad to see the Inglish again in Jersey ; but I have heard some again say, that the Inglish come into the country a little while, and then leave it and get their friends into trouble and then they loose their estates. I dont know whether many would join.

Mr. Washington's army is in three parts, two of them General Starling and Gen. Kables are upon the mountains over Bondbrook and Generals Sinclairs men on this side of Vanwikten bridge on high ground. They all seem to be all getting ready for something. The waggons at the artifishers are getting ready, and they are bringing in all the horses from the country—No body knows certain what they are going to do. A friend who keeps always with them, tells me that he cant tell (I must not tell you his name just now) he thinks something very grand if it could be known he thinks for he heard a servant of Lord Starlings say, that he heard Lord Starling tell another officer that he hoped they would have New-York before long and said the New England Militia were all coming to help them.

I would write you more but you have not given me time remember me to our friends in York—and dont forget to bring what I wrote for when you were last out. P— L—.

P. S. dont send your next letter by the same hand, for I have reason to be suspicious. I would not send this by him. When he left me he went strait to Washingtons head quarters.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL MAXWELL.

HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
7 May, 1779.

SIR,

I have received your two favors of yesterdays date —one of them with infinite concern. There is nothing which has happened in the course of the war that has given me so much pain as the remonstrance you mention from the officers of the first Jersey regiment. I cannot but consider it as a hasty and imprudent step, which on more cool consideration they will themselves condemn. I am very sensible of the inconveniences under which the officers of the Army labor and I hope they do me the justice to believe, that my endeavors to procure them relief are incessant. There is however more difficulty in satisfying their wishes than perhaps they are aware. Our resources have been hitherto very limited; the situation of our money is no small embarrassment, for which, though there are remedies, they cannot be the work of a moment;—Government is not insensible of the merits and sacrifices of the officers, nor, I am persuaded unwilling to make a compensation; but it is a truth, of which a little observation must convince us, that it is very much straitened in the means. Great allowances ought to be made on this account for any delay and seeming backwardness which may appear. Some of the states indeed have done as generously as it is at this juncture in their power, and if others have been less expeditious it ought to be ascribed to some peculiar cause, which a little time

aided by example will remove. The patience and perseverance of the Army have been under every disadvantage such as to do them the highest honor both at home and abroad; and have inspired me with an unlimited confidence in their virtue, which has consoled me amidst every perplexity and reverse of fortune, to which our affairs in a struggle of this nature were necessarily exposed. Now that we have made so great a progress to the attainment of the end we have in view—so that we cannot fail without a most shameful desertion of our own interests, any thing like a change of conduct would imply a very unhappy change of principles and a forgetfulness as well of what we owe to ourselves as to our country. Did I suppose it possible this could be the case even in a single regiment of the Army, I should be mortified and chagrined beyond expression. I should feel it as a wound given to my own honor, which I consider as embarked with that of the Army at large. But this I believe to be impossible. Any corps that was about to set an example of the kind would weigh well the consequences, and no officer of common discernment and sensibility would hazard them. If they should stand alone in it, independent of other consequences, what would be their feelings on reflecting that they had held themselves out to the world in a point of light inferior to the rest of the Army? or if their example should be followed, and become general, how would they console themselves for having been the foremost in bringing ruin and disgrace upon their country? They would remember

that the Army would share a double portion of the general infamy and distress; and that the character of an American officer would become as despicable as it is now glorious.

I confess the appearances in the present instance are disagreeable; but I am convinced they seem to mean more than they really do. The Jersey officers have not been outdone by any others in the qualities either of citizens or soldiers; and I am confident no part of them would seriously intend anything that would be a stain to their former reputation—The Gentlemen cannot be in earnest; they have only *reasoned wrong about the means of obtaining a good end*, and on reconsideration I hope and flatter myself they will renounce what must appear improper. At the opening of a campaign, when under marching orders for an important service,—their own honor, duty to the public and to themselves,—a regard to military propriety, will not suffer them to persist in a measure which would be a violation of them all. It will even wound their delicacy coolly to reflect that they have hazarded a step which has an air of dictating terms to their country,—by taking advantage of the necessity of the moment.

The declaration they have made to the state at so critical a time, that unless they obtain relief in the short period of three days, they must be considered out of the service, has very much this aspect; and the seeming relaxation of continuing till the state can have a *reasonable* time to provide other officers will be thought only a superficial veil.

I am now to request that you will convey my sentiments to the Gentlemen concerned and endeavor to make them sensible that they are in an error. The service for which the regiment was intended will not admit of delay; it must at all events march on Monday morning, in the first place to this camp, and further directions will be given when it arrives. I am sure I shall not be mistaken in expecting a prompt and chearful obedience.

I am, &c.,[1]

[1] The officers of the New Jersey brigade, after they were under orders to march, as a part of the western expedition against the Indians, sent a memorial to the legislature of the State then sitting at Trenton, clothed in very strong language, and demanding some equitable provision for the officers and men within three days. The legislature was embarrassed with the application in this form, as it assumed the air of menace, and some of the members said they would sooner see the brigade disbanded than yield to demands thus presented, however reasonable in themselves. To get over the difficulty, they hit upon the expedient of persuading the officers to withdraw the memorial, with the understanding that the legislature would instantly take the subject into consideration. In a few hours ample resolves were passed by both houses, granting nearly all that the memorial required. Two hundred pounds were ordered to be given to each commissioned officer, and forty dollars to each soldier, to enable them to pay their debts and prepare for the campaign. The money was immediately forwarded to the brigade at Elizabethtown.—*Lord Stirling's MS. Letter*, May 10th.

" I am sorry to find the gentlemen persist in the principles which dictated the step they have taken; as, the more the affair unfolds itself, the more reason I see to disapprove. But in the present view they have of the matter, and with their present feelings, it is not probable any new argument, that could be offered, would have more influence than the former. While therefore the gentlemen continue in the execution of their duty, as they declare themselves heartily disposed to do, I shall only regret that they have taken a step, of which they must hereafter see the impropriety.

" There is one thing to which I cannot forbear calling your particular attention. I observe on the memorial, of which you have sent me a copy, that the gentln. concerned dwell among other things upon the insufficiency of the soldiers' pay. This is a doctrine full of dangerous consequences, and which ought not to be countenanced in any way whatever. Neither is it well founded.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

HD.-QRS., MIDDLEBROOK, May 8th, 1779.

Monsieur Gerard did me the honor to deliver me your favor of the 26th. I shall always feel obliged to you, my dear Sir, for a free communication of your sentiments, on whatsoever subject may occur. The objects of your letter were important. Mr. Gerard, I dare say, has made it unnecessary for me to recapitulate what passed between him and myself, and has informed you of the alternative I proposed for improving the important event announced by him. From what he told me, it appears, that sufficient assurances cannot be given of points, which are essential to justify the great undertaking you had in view,[1] at the expense of other operations very interesting; and, indeed, though I was desirous to con-

All that the common soldiery of any country can expect is food and cloathing. The pay given in other armies is little more than nominal, very low in the first instance, and subject to a variety of deductions, that reduce it to nothing. This is the case with the British troops; though I believe they receive more than those of any other state in Europe. The idea of maintaining the families of the soldiers at the public expense is peculiar to us, and is incompatible with the finances of any government. Our troops have been uniformly better fed than any others. They are at this time very well clad, and probably will continue to be so. While this is the case, they will have no just cause of complaint. It is important that any misconception on this point should be rectified. I suppose every officer incapable of encouraging improper expectations in his men, but I must also hope that every exertion will be made to suppress them." —*Washington to Brigadier-General Maxwell*, 10 May, 1779.

In describing the matter to Congress, Washington, while deploring that the redress had been in a measure extorted, thus furnishing a "bad precedent," and regarding the conduct of the officers concerned as "highly blamable," took occasion to enforce upon that body the necessity of doing something towards an adequate provision for the officers, some of whom were applying for the coarse and unsuitable clothing destined for the common soldiery.

[1] An attack upon New York.

vince the Minister, that we are willing to make every effort in our power for striking a decisive blow, yet my judgment rather inclined to the second plan, as promising more certain success without putting so much to hazard. The relief of the Southern States appears to me an object of the greatest magnitude, and one that may lead to still more important advantages. I feel infinite anxiety on their account. Their internal weakness, disaffection, the want of energy, the general languor that has seized the people at large, makes me apprehend the most serious consequences. It would seem, too, as if the enemy meant to transfer the principal weight of the war that way. If it be true, that a large detachment has lately sailed from New York, and that Sir Henry Clinton is gone with it, in which several accounts I have received agree, (though I do not credit the latter,) and these should be destined for the southward, as is most probable, there can be little doubt, that this is the present plan. Charles Town, it is likely, will feel the next stroke. This, if it succeeds, will leave the enemy in full possession of Georgia, by obliging us to collect our forces for the defence of South Carolina, and will, consequently, open new sources for men and supplies, and prepare the way for a further career. The climate I am aware is an obstacle, but perhaps not so great as is imagined; and, when we consider the difference in our respective means of preserving health, it may possibly be found more adverse to our troops than to theirs. In this critical situation, I hardly know any resource we have, unless it be in the *event ex-*

pected;[1] and the supposed reinforcement now on its way,[2] for want of a competent land force on our part, may make even this dependence precarious. If it should fail, our affairs, which have a very sickly aspect in many respects, will receive a stroke they are little able to bear.

As a variety of accidents may disappoint our hopes here, it is indispensable we should make every exertion on our part to check the enemy's progress. This cannot be done to effect, if our reliance is solely or principally on militia; for a force continually fluctuating is incapable of any material effort. The States concerned ought by all means to endeavor to draw out men for a length of time. A smaller number, on this plan, would answer their purpose better; a great deal of expense would be avoided, and agriculture would be much less impeded. It is to be lamented, that the remoteness and weakness of this army would make it folly to attempt to send any succor from this quarter. Perhaps, from want of knowing the true state of our foreign expectations and prospects of finance, I may be led to contemplate the gloomy side of things; but I confess they appear to me to be in a very disagreeable train. The rapid decay of our currency, the extinction of public spirit, the increasing rapacity of the times, the want of harmony in our councils, the declining zeal of the people, the discontents and distresses of the officers of the army, and I may add, the prevailing security and insensibility to danger, are symptoms,

[1] The arrival of Count d'Estaing's fleet.

[2] That is, a reinforcement of British troops from England.

in my eye, of a most alarming nature. If the enemy have it in their power to press us hard this campaign, I know not what may be the consequence. Our army, as it now stands, is but little more than the skeleton of an army; and I hear of no steps that are taking to give it strength and substance. I hope there may not be great mistakes on this head, and that our abilities in general are not overrated. The applications for succor are numerous, but no pains are taken to put it in my power to afford them. When I endeavor to draw together the Continental troops for the most essential purposes, I am embarrassed with complaints of the exhausted, defenceless situation of particular States, and find myself obliged, either to resist solicitations, made in such a manner and with such a degree of emphasis as scarcely to leave me a choice, or to sacrifice the most obvious principles of military propriety and risk the general safety. I shall conclude by observing, that it is well worthy the ambition of a patriot statesman at this juncture, to endeavor to pacify party differences, to give fresh vigor to the springs of government, to inspire the people with confidence, and above all to restore the credit of our currency. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
17 May, 1779.

SIR,

The fleet mentioned in Governor Johnson's letter may contain the detachment, which lately sailed from

New York ; and the object may be, if not to rescue, at least to facilitate the desertion of the convention troops. This is the prevailing opinion in New York, countenanced among other circumstances by the Goodriches and others, natives of Virginia, being of the party. A rescue, with common prudence on our side, would be difficult. I hope this will not be wanting, but it may be no easy matter to prevent very considerable desertion. The enemy may possibly take some convenient and secure post to afford opportunities. Our obvious policy on an emergency will be to remove the troops, perhaps to divide them.

But the present appearance may be only a diversion, to delay the reinforcements going from Virginia to the southward, while the detachment may in reality have proceeded on its voyage to prosecute the intended operations in that quarter. In this case, the vessels that have been seen may have a few troops on board, the better to cover the artifice, and, it may be, will call at particular places, which have been preconcerted, to receive deserters instructed to meet them there. We should be upon our guard against a deception of this kind, which may unnecessarily detain the levies to the injury of our southern affairs. In the present uncertainty, and at this distance, it is hard to form any precise opinion of what ought to be done. I would only beg leave to observe, that the arms destined for the levies should be hastened forward to them, that they may be enabled to act according to circumstances, and that if appearances continue, without producing any thing decisive, the

convention troops ought to be effectually taken care of, and every provision made, that the levies may not be improperly detained.

The detachment, which sailed from New York, according to the best information I have received, consists of one battalion of guards, Lord Rawdon's corps, the forty-second Highlanders, a German regiment, and fifty Bucks county dragoons, estimated at about two thousand men. They were convoyed by the Raisonable of sixty-four, the Rainbow of forty-four guns, and a small frigate. There remain now at New York two frigates of twenty guns, two sloops of war, and a few privateers, which is all the protection there is to a large number of transports. If our frigates to the eastward could be speedily collected, I should hope a very important blow might be struck there without much risk. It seems to be well worth the experiment. If Congress view the matter in the same light, they will no doubt give the necessary directions with all possible secrecy and despatch. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN ARMSTRONG.

HEAD QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
18 May, 1779.

DEAR SIR:

I have received your favor of the 10th inst. by Col. Blaine, and thank you for it. Never was there an observation founded in more truth than *yours* of my having a *choice of difficulties.* I cannot say that the resolve of Congress which you allude to has

increased them, but with propriety I may observe it has added to my embarrassment in fixing on the least, inasmuch as it gives me *powers* without the means of execution when they ought at least to be co-equal.

The cries of the distressed, of the fatherless and widows, come to me from all quarters. The States are not behind hand in making application for assistance, notwithstanding scarce any one of them, that I can find, is taking effectual measures to complete its quota of continental troops, or has even power, or energy enough to draw forth its militia. Each complains of neglect, because it gets not what it asks, and conceives that none others suffers like itself, because it is ignorant of what others experience, receiving the complaints of its own people *only*. I have a hard time of it, and a disagreeable task. To please everybody is impossible; were I to undertake it, I should probably please nobody. If I know myself I have no partialities. I have from the beginning, and I hope I shall to the end, pursue to the utmost of my judgment and abilities, one steady line of conduct for the good of the great whole. This will, under all circumstances, administer consolation to myself, however short I may fall in the expectation of others.

But to leave smaller matters, I am much mistaken if the resolve of Congress hath not an eye to something far beyond our abilities. They are, I conceive, sufficiently acquainted with the state and strength of the army, of our resources, and how they are to

be drawn out. The powers given *may* be beneficial, but do not let Congress *deceive* themselves by false expectation, founded on a superficial view of things in general, and the strength of their own troops in particular. For in a word I give it to *you* as my opinion, that if the reinforcement expected by the enemy should arrive, and no effectual measures be taken to complete *our battalions* and stop the further depreciation of *our money*, I do not see upon what ground we are able, or mean to continue the contest. We now stand upon the brink of a precipice, from whence the smallest help casts us headlong. At this moment *our money does not pass*, at what rate I need not add, because the unsatisfied demands on the Treasury afford too many unequivocal and alarming proofs to stand in need of illustration. Even at this hour everything is, in a manner, at a stand, for want of this money (such as it is) and because many of the States instead of passing laws to aid the several departments of the army, have done the reverse, and hampered the transportation in such a way as to stop the supplies which are indispensably necessary, and for want of which we are embarrassed exceedingly.

This is a summary of our affairs in general, to which I am to add that the officers, unable any longer to support themselves in the army, are resigning continually, or doing what is worse, spreading discontent, and possibly the seeds of sedition. You will readily perceive, my dear Sir, that this is a confidential letter, and that however willing I may be to disclose such matters or such sentiments to particular

friends who are entrusted with the government of our great national concerns, I shall be extremely unwilling to have them communicated to any others; as I should feel much compunction if a single word or thought of mine was to create the smallest despair in our own people, or feed the hope of the enemy who I know pursue with avidity every track which leads to a discovery of the sentiments of men in office. Such (that is men in office) I wish to be impressed, deeply impressed with the importance of a close attention, and vigorous exertion of the means for extricating our finances from the deplorable situation in which they now are. I never was, much less reason have I now, to be afraid of the enemy's *arms;* but I have no scruple in declaring to *you*, that I have never yet seen the time in which our affairs (in my opinion) were at so low an ebb as they are at present; and without a speedy and capital change, we shall not be able in a very short time to call out the strength and resources of the country. The hour, therefore, is certainly come when party differences and disputes should subside, when every man (especially those in office) should with one hand and one heart, pull the same way and with all their strength. Providence has done, and I am persuaded is disposed to do, a great deal for us, but we are not to forget the fable of Jupiter and the carman.

P. S. I am not insensible to the force of your remark contained in the P. S. of your letter, and can assure you that the person you allude to was not appointed from motives of partiality or in a hasty

manner.[1] After long and cool deliberation, a due consideration of characters and circumstances, and some regard to military rules and propriety, I could do no better. I must work with such means as I am furnished. You know, I presume, that the command was offered to General G–tes, who declined the acceptance of it.

CIRCULAR TO THE STATES.

HEAD QUARTERS, MIDDLE BROOK,
22 May, 1779.

SIR,

The situation of our affairs at this period appears to me peculiarly critical, and this I flatter myself will apologise for that anxiety which impels me to take the liberty of addressing you on the present occasion.

The state of the army in particular is alarming on several accounts—that of its numbers is not among the least. Our battalions are exceedingly reduced, not only from the natural decay incident to the best composed armies; but from the expiration of the term of service for which a large proportion of the men were engaged. The measures hitherto taken to replace them, so far as has come to my knowledge, have been attended with very partial success; and I am ignorant of any others in contemplation that afford a better prospect. A reinforcement expected from Virginia, consisting of new levies and re-inlisted men, is necessarily ordered to the Southward. Not far short of one third of our whole force must be detached on a service undertaken by the direction of Congress and essential in itself. I shall only say of what remains, that when it is compared with the force of the enemy now actually at New York and Rhode Island, with the addition of the succors, they will in all probability receive from England, at the lowest computation—it will be found to justify very serious apprehensions and to demand the zealous attention of the different legislatures.

[1] Referring to Major-General Sullivan.

When we consider the rapid decline of our currency—the general temper of the times—the dissatisfaction of a great part of the people—the lethargy that overspreads the rest—the increasing danger to the Southern States—we cannot but dread the consequences of any misfortune in this quarter; and must feel the impolicy of trusting our security to a want of activity and enterprise in the Enemy.

An expectation of peace and an opinion of the Enemy's inability to send more troops to this country, I fear, have had too powerful an influence in our affairs. I have never heard any thing conclusive to authorise the former, and present appearances are in my opinion against it. The accounts we receive from Europe uniformly announce vigorous preparations to continue the war, at least another campaign. The debates and proceedings in Parliament wear this complexion. The public papers speak confidently of large reinforcements destined for America. The Minister in his speech asserts positively that reinforcements will be sent over to Sir Henry Clinton; though he acknowledges the future plan of the war will be less extensive than the past—Let it be supposed, that the intended succors will not exceed five thousand men. This will give the Enemy a superiority very dangerous to our safety, if their strength be properly exerted and our situation is not materially altered for the better. These considerations and many more that might be suggested point to the necessity of immediate and decisive exertions to complete our battalions and to make our military force more respectable. I thought it my duty to give an idea of the true state and to urge the attention of the States to a matter in which their safety and happiness are so deeply interested. I hope a concern for the public good will be admitted as the motive and excuse of my importunity.

There is one point which I beg leave to mention also. The want of system which has prevailed in the clothier's department has been the source of innumerable evils—defective supplies, irregular and unequal issues—great waste, loss, and expense to the public—general dissatisfaction in the Army—much confusion and perplexity—an additional load of business to the officers commanding, make but a part of them. I have for a long time past most ardently desired to see a reformation. Congress by a

resolve of the 23d of March has established an ordinance for regulating this department. According to this, there is a sub or State clothier to be appointed by each State. I know not what instructions may have been given relative to these appointments; but, if the matter now rests with the particular States, I take the liberty to press their execution without loss of time. The service suffers amazingly from the disorder in this department, and the regulations for it cannot be too soon carried into effect. * * *

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

INSTRUCTIONS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 31 May, 1779.

The expedition you are appointed to command is to be directed against the hostile tribes of the Six Nations of Indians, with their associates and adherents. The immediate objects are the total destruction and devastation of their settlements, and the capture of as many prisoners of every age and sex as possible. It will be essential to ruin their crops now in the ground & prevent their planting more—The troops to be employed under your command are Clinton's, Maxwell's, Poor's and Hand's brigades, and Independent Companies raised in the State of Pennsylvania. In Hand's brigade I comprehend all the detached corps of Continental troops now on the Susquehanna, and Spencer's regiment. Cortlandt's I consider as belonging to Clinton's brigade; Alden's may go to Poor's, & Butler's & the rifle corps to Maxwell's or Hand's.

Clinton's brigade, you are informed, has been ordered to rendezvous at Canajoharie, subject to your orders, either to form a junction with the main body on the Susquehanna, by the way of Otsego, or to proceed up the Mohawk River and coöperate in the best manner circumstances will permit, as you judge most advisable. So soon as your preparations are in sufficient forwardness, you will assemble your main body at Wyoming, and proceed thence to Tioga, taking from that place the most direct and practicable route into the heart of The Indian Settlements. You will establish such intermediate posts, as you think necessary for the

security of your communication and convoys ; nor need I caution you, while you leave a sufficiency of men for their defence, to take care to diminish your operating force as little as possible. A post at Tioga will be particularly necessary, either a stockade fort, or an intrenched camp ; if the latter, a block-house should be erected in the interior. I would recomd. that some post in the center of the Indian Country, should be occupied with all expedition, with a sufficient quantity of provisions ; whence parties should be detached to lay waste all the settlements around, with instructions to do it in the most effectual manner, that the country may not be merely *overrun*, but *destroyed*.

I need not urge the necessity of using every method in your power to gain intelligence of the enemy's strength, motions, and designs ; nor need I suggest the extraordinary degree of vigilance and caution which will be necessary to guard against surprises from an adversary so secret, desultory, and rapid as the Indians.

If a detachment operate on the Mohock River, the commanding officer should be instructed to be very watchful that no troops come from Oswegatchie and Niagara to Oswego without his knowledge : and for this purpose he should keep trusty spies at those three places to advertise him instantly of the movement of any party and its force. This detachment should also endeavor to keep up a constant intercourse with the main body.

I beg leave to suggest, as general rules that ought to govern your operations, to make rather than receive attacks, attended with as much impetuosity, shouting, and noise, as possible ; and to make the troops act in as loose and dispersed a way as is consistent with a proper degree of government, concert, and mutual support. It should be previously impressed upon the minds of the men, whenever they have an opportunity, to rush on with the war-whoop and fixed bayonet. Nothing will disconcert and terrify the Indians more than this.

More than common care will be necessary of your arms and ammunition from the nature of the service—They should be particularly inspected after a rain or the passage of any deep water.

After you have very thoroughly completed the destruction of their settlements, if the indians should show a disposition for

peace, I would have you encourage it, on condition that they will give some decisive evidence of their sincerity, by delivering up some of the principal instigators of their past hostility into our hands: Butler, Brant, the most mischievous of the Tories, that have joined them, or any others they may have in their power, that we are interested to get into ours. They may possibly be engaged, by address, secrecy, and stratagem, to surprise the garrison of Niagara, and the shipping on the Lakes, and put them into our possession. This may be demanded, as a condition of our friendship, and would be a most important point gained. If they can render a service of this kind, you may stipulate to assist them in their distress with supplies of provisions and other articles of which they will stand in need; having regard, in the expectations you give them, to our real abilities to perform. I have no power at present to authorize you to conclude a treaty of peace with them, but you may agree upon the terms of one, letting them know that it must be finally ratified by Congress, and giving them every proper assurance that it will. I shall write to Congress on the subject and endeavor to obtain more ample and definitive authority.

When we have effectually chastised them, we may then listen to peace, and endeavor to draw further advantages from their fears. But, even in this case, great caution will be necessary to guard against the snares, which their treachery may hold out. They must be explicit in their promises, give substantial pledges for their performance, and execute their engagements with decision and despatch. Hostages are the only kind of security to be depended on. Should Niagara fall into your hands in the manner I have mentioned—you will do every thing in your power for preserving and maintaining it, by establishing a chain of posts, in such manner as shall appear to you most safe and effectual and tending as little to reduce our general force as possible—This however we shall be better able to decide as the future events of the campaign unfold themselves—I shall be more explicit on the subject hereafter.—When you have completed the objects of your expedition, unless otherwise directed in the mean time, you will return to form a junction with the main army, by the most convenient, expeditious, and secure route, according to circumstances. The route by the Mohawk River, if it can be pursued

without too great a risk, will perhaps be most eligible on several accounts. Much should depend on the relative position of the main army at the time. As it is impossible to foresee what may be the exigencies of the service in this quarter, this united with other important reasons makes it essential that your operations should be as rapid and that the expedition should be performed in as little time as will be consistent with its success and efficacy.

And here I cannot forbear repeating my former caution, that your troops may move as light and as little encum[bered] as possible even from their first outset—The state of our magazines demands it as well as other considerations—if much time should be lost in transporting the troops and stores up the River—the provision for the expedition will be consumed, & the general scantiness of our supplies will not permit their being replaced—consequently the whole enterprise may be defeated. I would recommend it to you for this purpose that the General Officers should make an actual inspection of the baggage of their several brigades and absolutely reject to be left behind at proper places, every article that can be dispensed with on the expedition—This is an extraordinary case and requires extraordinary attention. Relying perfectly upon your judgment, prudence, and activity, I have the highest expectation of success equal to our wishes ; and I beg leave to assure you, that I anticipate with great pleasure the honor, which will redound to yourself, and the advantage to the common cause, from a happy termination of this important enterprise.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK,
3 June, 1779.

SIR,

In the letter, which I did myself the honor to write to Your Excellency on the 25th of May, I mentioned the appearances which indicated that the enemy had some important enterprise in contemplation.[1] These

[1] A number of boats were collecting at King's Bridge which were so prepared as to indicate an attempt requiring secrecy and silence.

appearances have since increased, 'till they seem to have arrived at a very interesting crisis. The enclosed extracts from the intelligence I have successively received will show their progress, and the point at which they last stood. Congress will observe, by General St. Clair's letter, that he expected to reach Pompton last night. The Virginia division, commanded by Lord Stirling, marched yesterday for the same place. Baron de Kalb, with the Maryland troops, follows this morning. We shall press forward with all diligence, and do every thing in our power to disappoint the enemy. I expect to set out this day towards the Highlands, by way of Morris Town. I mention the route, that any despatches coming from Congress may the more readily find me. There are five brigades of Continental troops, besides the two Carolina regiments, under the command of General McDougall.

At the first appearance of a movement among the enemy, I redoubled my efforts to put the army here in a state of readiness for taking the field. These have been seconded by the utmost exertions of the Quarter-Master-General; but the very great difficulty of procuring horses and waggons, and the scarcity of forage, have unavoidably retarded our preparations. I beg leave to enclose an extract of a letter I have just received from General Gates, of the 25 of May on the very important subject of money. I entreat that Congress will be pleased to order him an immediate and adequate supply, as the necessity is urgent and it would be dangerous to risk a revival

of the discontent, which lately appeared among the troops at Providence for want of pay. It is also much to be desired, that he may be enabled to re-enlist the men he mentions during the war. I am, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

RINGWOOD IRON-WORKS, 6 June, 1779.

SIR,

On the 3d I had the Honor to address Your Excellency from Middle Brook and Morris Town—and to transmit you all the intelligence I had then received respecting the movements of the enemy on the North River; and of the measures I had taken and was about to pursue in consequence.

I am now to inform you, according to the advices I have obtained, that, on the 2d in the morning, the Enemy opened a Battery at Stony Point, which lies on the West side of the Hudson at the landing at King's Ferry, against a small detached work which had been erected on Verplanck's Point, on the East side, and kept up a constant fire upon it, in conjunction with their Ships, till four in the afternoon, when the party stationed in it, finding that it was also invested on the land side in force, surrendered by capitulation.[2] The next day, that part of the Enemy,

[1] Read in Congress, June 5th.

[2] The enemy landed in two divisions, one on the east side of the river under General Vaughan, eight miles below Verplanck's Point, and the other on the west side three miles below Stony Point, where the garrison consisted of about forty men. They evacuated the post, as the enemy approached, on the 31st of May. Opposite to Stony Point was a small fort at Verplanck's Point, called Fort Lafayette. This was garrisoned by a company of seventy men,

which was landed on the East side of the River, computed at five thousand, advanced to the Bald Hill below the Continental Village, when it was expected that they meant to attack our troops in that quarter and to gain, if possible, Nelson's Point opposite to Fort Arnold,[1] while Sir Henry Clinton, with the remainder of the army, should proceed from Haverstraw Bay against the Fort, by the routes on the West side. This however was not attempted, and the body of the Enemy, that appeared before the village, returned, without making any attack, to the ground from which they had moved. The Enemy have remained since in two divisions on the opposite sides of the River. Their Vessels have generally fallen down below King's Ferry, and twelve square-rigged, with Eight of a smaller size and Fifteen flat-bottomed boats, with troops on board, stood down the River yesterday, and were seen till they turned the Point, which forms the upper part of Tappan Bay. The rest of the fleet (the whole of which is reported to have consisted of about Seventy sail, and a hundred & fifty flat-bottomed boats great & small) keep their station ; and the division of troops on this side, from the latest advices, were very industriously em-

commanded by Captain Armstrong, who was compelled to surrender when attacked by the cannonade from Stony Point, and by General Vaughan's party on the other side. The following were the terms of the capitulation.

"*On the Glacis of Fort Lafayette, June* 1st, 1779. His Excellency Sir Henry Clinton, and Commodore Sir George Collier, grant to the garrison of Fort Lafayette terms of safety to the persons and property (contained in the fort) of the garrison, they surrendering themselves prisoners of war. The officers shall be permitted to wear their side-arms.

"JOHN ANDRÉ, *Aid-de-Camp.*"

[1] Fort Arnold was at West Point.

ployed yesterday in fortifying Stony Point, which, from its peninsular and commanding form, is naturally strong, and which, from the narrowness of the neck, that connects it to the main, may be insulated and maintained without very great difficulty. This, Sir, is a summary of the intelligence, and of the situation of the Enemy.[1]

[1] Sir Henry Clinton, who commanded this expedition in person, was not entirely satisfied at the present juncture with the instructions he received from the ministry, and the part he was made to act. In writing to Lord George Germaine, after stating the numerous difficulties with which he had been obliged to contend, and hinting at the apparent want of confidence implied by the tenor of the instructions lately received, he goes on to say: "Is it to be supposed, that I am not on the watch to profit by every favorable disposition in any part of the continent, or to improve every accidental advantage of circumstances? I am on the spot; the earliest and most exact intelligence on every point ought naturally to reach me. It is my interest, as well as my duty, more than any other person's living, to inform myself minutely and justly of the particular views, connexions, state, and temper of every province, nay, of every set of men within the limits of my command, and it is my business to mark every possible change in their situation. Why then, my Lord, without consulting me, will you admit the ill-digested or interested suggestions of people, who cannot be competent judges of the subject, and puzzle me by hinting wishes, with which I cannot agree, and yet am loath to disregard? For God's sake, my Lord, if you wish that I should do any thing, leave me to myself, and let me adapt my efforts to the hourly change of circumstances, and take the risk of my want of success. I do not wish to be captious, but I certainly have not had that attention paid to my wishes, and that satisfaction, which the weight of my situation, and the hopes which you held forth for me, gave me reason to expect."—New York, May 22d.

The persons here alluded to, as communicating "ill-digested or interested suggestions," were the refugees and late civil officers in the colonies, who had gone back to England. Through their friends in America, they received intelligence from every quarter, exaggerating the distresses of the people, the weak condition of Washington's army, the dissensions in Congress, and the exhausted state of the country. It was said, that the people were groaning under the tyranny of their leaders, and suffering an oppression, which they would not much longer endure. The prospects of the loyalists were painted in the most flattering colors, and nothing was wanting for the success of their cause, but perseverance on the part of the government, and a vigorous prosecution of the war. Promises were held out at different points, in

Their movements and conduct are very perplexing, and leave it difficult to determine what are their real objects. However, as the posts in the Highlands are of infinite consequence, and the point in which we can be most essentially injured, I shall take every measure in my power to provide for their security, and accordingly shall make such a disposition of the army as shall best promise to answer the end. If they should not operate against those posts, it would seem that one part of their expedition, and a principal one, is, to cut off the communication by the way of King's Ferry by establishing Garrisons. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

HD.-QRS. SMITH'S CLOVE, 11 June, 1779.

SIR,

I have duly received your two letters of the 25 and 30th of May, which the situation of affairs in this quarter prevented my acknowledging sooner. I can only lament, that your prospects of reinforcement are so unfavorable. The appearances are not better for the main army. It would almost seem,

Carolina, Virginia, and New England, that a respectable body of troops would give countenance to the loyalists, and draw together numerous concealed friends to the government, whose fears would be overcome only by such a substantial encouragement. These reports were carefully conveyed to the ministers, who lent to them a willing ear, and sent out instructions to Sir Henry Clinton, recommending attacks at different places, and thus deranging all the plans which he had formed, after having obtained the best knowledge of facts and circumstances. This delusion prevailed during the whole war. The ministers acted under a perpetual deception. In looking back upon events, as they actually occurred, it is impossible to conceive a collection of state papers more extraordinary for the erroneous impressions, contracted knowledge, and impracticable aims of the writer, than the correspondence of Lord George Germaine with the British commanders in America.—*Sparks.*

as if the States were determined to let our security depend entirely on a want of enterprise in the enemy.

With respect to my plans, the only offensive one I could have in contemplation independent on contingencies, has been announced to you; I mean the western expedition. Our defensive ones must depend on the movements of the enemy. I imagined you had too just an idea of the comparative state of their strength and ours, to make a particular explanation on this head necessary; but the opinion you express in your last, of the glorious opportunity of making an attack upon New York, shows that you must either greatly overrate our force, or undervalue that of the enemy. Indeed, you are entirely mistaken in your estimate of the detachments, which have gone from New York since the 1st of October last, including that to Virginia, which has lately returned. They did not amount to much more than one half the number you mentioned; at the highest calculation they could not exceed nine thousand five hundred. The force then remaining at New York and its dependencies, by the lowest computation, was not less than nine thousand serviceable men. It is now eleven thousand. You will judge from this state of facts, whether the opportunity for attacking New York was a very glorious one or not.[1]

I am almost entirely in the dark, as to our foreign prospects, and can therefore give you no light on that head. I have little more for my own govern-

[1] *From General Gates' Letter.*—"As it will be too late for any of the army with your Excellency to disappoint the enemy's immediate views in Virginia, a glorious opportunity at this instant presents itself for attacking New York with the fairest prospect of advantage; sixteen thousand of the enemy's troops

ment, than newspaper intelligence, common report, and conjecture. Instantly on the receipt of yours of the 25th of May, I despatched an extract from it to Congress, and *urged* an immediate and competent supply of money. I agree with you, that a precedent of payment for deficiency of rations would be dangerous and very hard to get over.

You will have heard that the enemy have made a movement up the North River, and taken possession of Verplanck's and Stony points. They are fortifying and seem determined to keep possession. It is judicious on their part, and will be productive of advantages to them and inconveniences to us, which will be too obvious to you to need enumeration. They have about six thousand men on the two divisions. A part of those, who came up at first, have since returned to New York. An attempt to dislodge them, from the natural strength of the positions, would require a greater force and apparatus, than we are masters of. All we can do, is to lament what we cannot remedy, endeavor to prevent a further progress on the river, and to make the advantages of what they have now gained as limited as possible.[1] I am, Sir, &c.

having most undoubtedly been detached from that city since October last."—Providence, May 30th.

When General Sullivan left Providence to take command of the Indian expedition, General Gates removed his head-quarters to that place, and General Heath resumed the command in Boston.

[1] The possession of these posts was looked upon as a step to operations against West Point and other posts in the Highlands. "Our communication by King's Ferry, far the easiest, is at an end. The extent and difficulty of land transportation are considerably increased,—a new resort and sanctuary afforded

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
27 June, 1779.

SIR,

It gives me infinite pain, that the circumstances of the service oblige me to trouble Congress with a frequent repetition of the same subjects. But every hour distracts my attention with fresh instances of the inconveniences, that result from the want of system in a department which I have frequently mentioned. These compel me again to intreat that Congress will be pleased to take decisive measures to extricate it from the confusion in which it is involved.

I am at a loss to know to whom I am to address my self, as head of the clothier's department. Every deputy seems to act by a separate and independent authority. There seems to be no person to take a general superintendency, to apportion the

to the disaffected in these parts of the country, and a new door opened to draw supplies and to distress and corrupt the inhabitants. Reasons, which need not be explained, put it out of our power to prevent it beforehand or to remedy it now it has happened. We have taken post for the present with the main body of the army in this Clove, where we are as well situated, as we could be anywhere else, to succor the forts in case the future operations of the enemy should be directed against them."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 11 June, 1779.

On the 23d, General Washington removed his head-quarters to New Windsor, where he was more contiguous to the forts, and better situated to attend to different parts of the army on both sides of Hudson's River. The main body of the army was left at Smith's Clove under the command of General Putnam. The object now in view was to guard against an attack upon West Point. General McDougall was transferred to the command at that post. Three brigades were stationed on the east side of the river: Nixon's at Constitution Island; Parsons' opposite to West Point, with instructions to send fatigue parties daily across the river to assist in constructing the works; and Huntington's on the principal road leading to Fishkill. These three brigades were put under the command of General Heath, who had been recently ordered to repair from Boston to head-quarters.

stock in hand to the different parts of the Army, their numbers and wants; and to preserve a common rule in the mode of delivery. For want of this, while the troops at one post are amply supplied, those at another are suffering the greatest distress. The pleasure of the commanding officer is the only standard by which the supplies are regulated; and it has sometimes happened that particular officers, either more attentive to the accommodation of the troops under their immediate command, than to the general convenience of the service, or unacquainted with the state of our resources, have taken steps of a very exceptionable nature for supplying their particular commands at the expence of the Army at large. Even the officers at some posts have been liberally furnished either from the public stores or from private ones by orders on public agents to pay for them, while those at others have seen their most pressing applications rejected. For my own part as there was no regular provision made, adequate to the wants of the officers in general, I have been deaf to their importunities, even when there have been a few articles in store. Congress will easily perceive how a discrimination of this kind must operate, and will feel the necessity of adopting some plan that will make the distributions more equal and uniform. This can only be done by having a proper head and regular subordination throughout the members with general regulations for the management of the department. I request to be informed if Mr. Mease is continued Clothier General.

The situation of the sixteen additional regiments

has been all along the most disagreeable that can be immagined. They have been destitute of every advantage the other troops have enjoyed. The resignations from the extreme necessities of the officers have been numerous, and the spirit of resigning is now become almost universal. Every expedient that could operate upon their hopes, their patriotism, or their honor has been exhausted. The Regiments for want of a sufficent number of officers and for want of zeal in the few that remain are dwindling to nothing. Several of those, Gentlemen of sentiment and much attached to the service, lately waited upon me to represent their case. They stated their sufferings in terms the most affecting and supported by facts that could not be questioned—Their expressions of regret at finding themselves obliged to quit the Army had every appearance of genuineness. I prevailed upon them with great difficulty to suspend their determination a little longer to see whether some measures would not be adopted in their favor.

The resolve of the 15th March has hitherto had no operation nor will it in all probability answer the purpose for which it was intended. If the States should ever interest themselves in behalf of these Regiments — the mixture of different men from different States in the same Corps will make the supply very troublesome and precarious. I see no alternative but this—either Congress must make a special provision for them, or they must in a little time gradually dissolve. The Cavalry and part of the Artillery are upon a similar establishment. I am informed that some cloathing has been lately pro-

vided on continental account for the officers and are coming on to the Army, though I have had no regular information on the subject—If this should be true, it is requisite some particular direction should be given for their distribution; I shall be glad to receive the commands of Congress on the subject.

I have frequent applications from the officers for allowances of spirits; supported by a plea that it is done elsewhere. I am informed that the officers at Providence are supplied with rum at the rate of nine shilgs. ℔ gallon. I think it highly reasonable and necessary, that they should be supplied at a moderate rate proportioned to their pay; but as there is no authority for doing it, I do not think myself at liberty to adopt the measure; at the same time I should be happy to see so reasonable a request gratified, and the whole put upon an equal footing by some general regulation. They cannot possibly furnish themselves otherwise. If Congress should think proper to direct any allowance of this kind, it will perhaps be expedient to make it conditional, to be given when the stock in store will permit and liable to be suspended by the commanding officer. My situation, as the affair now stands, is delicate and disagreeable. The officers of this Army will not be satisfied with less indulgence than is enjoyed by those of the other troops. They may view the refusal on my part as too punctilious and rigid. This concurs with other reasons to make me anxious a speedy determination should take place, either to make the allowance general or prevent it everywhere. * * *

TO MAJOR BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.[1]

NEW WINDSOR, 27 June, 1779.

SIR,

Your letter of yesterday came safe to my hands, and by the Dragoon, who was the bearer of it, I send you ten guineas for C——r.[2] His successor, whose name I have no desire to be informed of, provided his intelligence is good and seasonably transmitted, should endeavor to hit upon some certain mode of conveying his informations quickly, for it is of little avail to be told of things after they have become matter of public notoriety and known to every body.

[1] Major Tallmadge was an officer of the second regiment of Light Dragoons, and, on account of his activity, vigilance, and ability, he was often stationed near the enemy's lines. He held constant correspondence directly with the Commander-in-chief, whose confidence he seems to have enjoyed in a marked degree.

[2] A spy, by the name of Culper, who had been long employed in New York, and whose intelligence had been of great importance. There was also a Culper, Jr.

Of another spy Washington wrote to Major-General Robert Howe, August 17, 1779:

"I am really at a loss what opinion to form of this man. His former conduct in this dispute, from the accounts I have had of it, are in his favor; his conduct in the execution of his present occupation has not been to his disadvantage; but still there are some little appearances about him, that give me distrust; and, as the enemy have it more in their power to reward certain services than we have, in the way which is most tempting, I always think it necessary to be very guarded with those, who are professedly acting as double characters. This has hitherto prevented my doing any thing for the man in question, in the way of office, lest it might really put it in his power to do us mischief; but, as the pretext upon which he applies is plausible and may be honest, I shall endeavor to find some place, which will answer the purpose, and, by keeping him mostly remote from the army, leave it the less in his power to turn it to our injury. We must endeavor to make it his interest to be faithful; for, as it is apparent he means to get something by the business, and will even receive double wages, we must take care, if possible, not to let motives of interest on the other side bear down his integrity and inclination to serve us. Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder."

This new agent should communicate his signature, and the private marks by which genuine papers are to be distinguished from counterfeits. There is a man on York Island, living at or near the North River, by the name of George Higday, who, I am told, hath given signal proofs of his attachment to us, and at the same time stands well with the enemy. If, upon inquiry, this is found to be the case, (and such caution should be used in investigating the matter as well on his own acct. as on that of Higday) he will be a fit instrument to convey intelligence to me, while I am on the West side of the North River, as he is enterprising and connected with people in Bergen county, who will assist in forming a chain to me, in any manner they shall agree on.

I do not know whom H—— employs; but from H—— I obtain intelligence; and his name and business should be kept profoundly secret, otherwise we not only lose the benefits derived from it, but may subject him to some unhappy fate. I observe what you say respecting your position at Bedford, and the fatigue of the Horse. With regard to the first, when Bedford was pointed out, it was descriptive only of a central place between the two Rivers, and as near the enemy as you could, with military prudence, take post for the purpose of covering the Inhabitants, and preventing the ravages of small parties. The judgment of the officer commanding is, under the idea just expressed, to direct the particular spot and choice of ground, which ought to be varied continually, while you are near enough the

enemy to give assistance to the People. With respect to the second matter, I have only to add, that I do not wish to have the Horse unnecessarily exposed or fatigued; but if, in the discharge of accustomed duties, they should get worn down, there is no help for it. Colo. Moylan's regiment is on its march to join you, which will render the duty easier, and ye Troops there more respectable. I wish you to use every method in your power, through H—— and others, to obtain information of the enemy's situation, and as far as it is to be come at designs. C——r speaks of the Enemy's force up the River as not exceeding eight thousand men; but as I know he is mistaken, if he comprehends their whole force, I should be glad if his successor were cautioned against giving positive numbers by guess. This is deceptious; let him ascertain the particular corps, which can be no difficult matter to do, and he will soon, by taking a little pains indirectly, come at the strength of them and where they lye. I am, Sir, yours, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

NEW WINDSOR, 1 July, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received a letter from Genl. Clinton at Canajoharie, which has filled me with inexpressible concern, as I apprehend the worst consequence to the Expedition under your command, from the

[1] In a letter of the 29th Washington requested Major Henry Lee to endeavor to employ some spy to go into the works at Stony Point, or at least make as careful an examination of the particular kind of works, the strength of the garrison, and other points.

measures, which have been pursued there. My intention, and which I thought sufficiently explained and known to you, was, that the Troops under the command of Genl. Clinton should be at Canajoharie and in the vicinity with Boats ready to proceed up the Mohawk River, or across to Otsego, as you should under a full consideration of all circumstances and information resolve on; and that, if the latter should be the choice, he should move rapidly over, quite light, with a sufficient stock of provisions and stores only to serve him till he could form his junction with you at Tioga, where every thing was to be provided.

Instead of this he had transported, and by the last accts. was transporting, Provisions and stores for his whole Brigade three months, and 220 or 30 Batteaux to receive them; by which means, in the place of having his design concealed till the moment of execution and forming his junction with you, in a manner by surprise, it is announced, the enemy watching him, and, instead of moving light, rapidly, and undiscovered, he goes encumbered with useless supplies, and has his defence weakened by the attention he must pay to convoy and the length of his line, at a time when more than probable, the whole force of the enemy will be employed to oppose him. I did not expressly require that Genl. Clinton, in case of his forming a junction with you at Tioga, should proceed without provisions and stores; but, from the whole scope and tenor of our several conversations on the subject, the difficulties and dangers that were

apprehended in ye rout, the preparations that were making for the whole force on the Susquehanna, & other circumstances, I had not a doubt of its being fully understood, and took it for granted, when he was placed under your orders, that he would have been instructed accordingly.[1] * * * I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

NEW WINDSOR, 4 July, 1779.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Since my last, which was written (to the best of my recollection, for not having my Papers with me I cannot have recourse to dates,) in March, both Armies continued quiet in their winter cantonments till about the first of May, when a detachment of about 2000 of the enemy, under the command of General Matthew, convoyed by Sir George Collier, made a sudden invasion of a neck of land, comprehending Portsmouth and Suffolk in Virginia, and

[1] General Clinton got his boats and provisions expeditiously to the south end of Otsego Lake, as will appear by the following extract from a letter written by him to Governor Clinton.—"I have now at this place two hundred and eight boats, with all the stores, provision, and baggage of the army; so that I am now in the most perfect readiness to move down the Susquehanna whenever I receive General Sullivan's orders. I have thrown a dam across the outlet, which I conceive to be of infinite importance, as it has raised the Lake at least two feet, by which the boats may be taken down with less danger than otherwise; although from the intricate winding of the channel I expect to meet some difficulties on the way."—July 6th.

In urging upon Pennsylvania the necessity of sending to Sullivan the Independent Companies which he expected from that State, Washington wrote, July 5th:—"I must entreat in the most pressing terms, that the Council will be pleased, without delay, to take effectual measures to have the number of men, originally requested, sent forward. If the Independent Companies are

after plundering and destroying the property (chiefly private) in those places, and stealing a number of negros, returned to New York, the moment they found the country rising in arms to oppose them.

This exploit was immediately followed by a movement of Sir Henry Clinton up the North River the beginning of June. What the real object of this expedition was, I cannot with certainty inform you. Our posts in the highlands were supposed to be his aim, because they were of importance to us, and consonant to his former plan for prosecuting the war; but whether upon a nearer approach he found them better provided and more difficult of access than he expected, or whether his only view was to cut off the communication between the East and the West side of the River below the highlands, I shall not undertake to decide—certain it is, however, that he came up in full force, disembarked at King's ferry, and there began to fortify the points on each side, which to all intents and purposes are Islands, and by nature exceedingly strong.

not ready, I beg their place may be supplied by militia to be relieved periodically. The Council are fully sensible of the importance of success in the present expedition, and of the fatal mischiefs which would attend a defeat. We should perhaps lose an army, and our frontiers would be desolate and deluged in blood. A large reinforcement has been sent from Canada to join the savages. They are collecting in force for a vigorous opposition; and if they are successful, their devastations will exceed any thing we have yet experienced. Their means will be increased, and their cruelty will be emboldened by success and sharpened by revenge.

"It was not in my power to send a greater Continental force. I stretched this string as hard as it would possibly bear, and relied on the further aid of the States more immediately concerned. I hope I shall not be eventually disappointed. I flatter myself the Council will think my anxiety on this occasion natural, and will excuse my importunity."

This movement of the enemy and my sollicitude for the security of our defences on the river, induced me to march the Troops which were cantoned at Middlebrook, immediately to their support, and for the further purpose of strengthening the defences by additional works.—in this business I have been employed near three weeks. While the enemy have not been idle in establishing themselves as above. They have reinforced their main army with part of the garrison at Rhode Island.

General Sullivan commands an Expedition against the Six Nations, which, aided by Butler and Brandt, with their Tory Friends and some force from Canada, have greatly infested our Frontiers. He has already marched to the Susquehanna, with about 4000 men, all Continental soldiers, and I trust will destroy their settlements and extirpate them from the Country which more than probably will be affected by their flight, as it is not a difficult matter for them to take up their Beds and walk.

We have received very favorable accounts from South Carolina, by which it appears that the British Troops before Charlestown met with a defeat and are in a very perilous situation. We have this matter from such a variety of hands that it scarcely admits of a doubt, and yet no official information is received of it.

When, my dear Marquis, shall I embrace you again? Shall I ever do it?—or has the charms of the amiable and lovely Marchioness—or the smiles and favors of your Prince, withdrawn you from us

entirely? At all times and under all circumstances, I have the honor to be, with the greatest personal regard, attachment and affection.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, NEW WINDSOR, 9 July, 1779.

On the 1st Instant I transmitted your Excellency a Copy of a Letter I had received from General Gates, advising that a number of Vessels with Troops, had left Newport and directed their course up the Sound. I had previously on the 27th, from the intelligence obtained through different Channels that the Enemy intended to draw a part or the whole

[1] "I intend in the orders of to-morrow to publish and approve the sentences of De Pew, King and Bettis; but as we have had frequent examples latterly in the main army, I feel a reluctance at present to add to the number. I therefore propose, as it is the anniversary of our independence, to proclaim a general pardon to all the prisoners now under sentence of death in the army. . . . Inclosed you will receive the report of a committee of the officers of the Right Wing; in which they enter into a voluntary engagement not to purchase certain articles but at a limited price. This has originated with themselves, and though I do not expect much from it, yet as they have entered into the measure, and as its utility and success depend on its being general, I send it to you to take the sense of the officers under your command. The experiment can do no harm, and it may do good."—*Washington to General McDougall*, 3 July, 1779.

"I have transmitted copies of the proceedings of the committee of officers to General Heath and General McDougall, that they may be submitted to the consideration of the officers of the corps under their immediate command. If they agree to them, I shall direct the prices affixed to the several enumerated articles to be published in general orders."—*Washington to Lord Stirling*, 4 July, 1779.

"To day being the anniversary of independence, you will be pleased to have it taken notice of by discharging thirteen pieces of cannon at one o'clock. I wish we had it in our power to distribute a portion of rum to the soldiers, to exhilarate their spirits upon the occasion, but unfortunately our stock is too scanty to permit."—*Washington to General McDougall*, 4 July, 1779.

of their Troops from Rhode Island, requested him in case of the former event to detach a proportionable part of his force to this Army—and of the latter to march himself with the whole of it. Upon receiving General Gates's Letter of the 25th, which ascertained the sailing of part of the Enemy's force from Newport, I wrote him, if he had not detached any troops from his command in consequence of my requisitions of the 27th, and if the detachment of the Enemy which he had mentioned to have sailed, had not returned or were not acting in his vicinity, to dispatch Glover's Brigade. I was induced to these measures from a view of the comparative strength of the two Armies in this Quarter—from the precarious if not dangerous situation Our's would be in, if the Enemy's should be reinforced without an equal augmentation on our part—from a strong probability that they had some serious attempt in contemplation this way, & from the little prospect after such a diminution of their force there, of their acting otherwise than defensively in that Quarter—or of General Gates's being able to act offensively against them—if no part of his command were withdrawn. The detachment from Newport disembarked at White Stone and according to some accounts came as far as Hell gate.

On the 4th instant the Enemy embarked a Body of Troops at Frog's Neck on the Sound, consisting, from the best information, of grenadiers, light infantry, and a few Hessians, amounting to about Eighteen Hundred, tho some reports make them more, and proceeded Eastward. I did not receive intelligence

of this till the afternoon of the 7th, having been absent from Head-Quarters from the morning of the preceding day, on a visit to our out-posts below, and those lately established by the Enemy; when, from an apprehension that they might intend a sudden incursion into the State of Connecticut, I despatched an Express to His Excellency Governor Trumbull, and to the Commanding Officer of Glover's brigade, advising them of the movement, and directing the latter to proceed by some rout not far from the Sound, that he might with greater facility form a junction with the militia, and co-operate with them in case the Enemy should make a descent. I have not yet heard what is the object of this party: but we have it by report, that they have landed at New Haven, and most probably for the purpose of plundering, and perhaps burning, as these appear to form a considerable part of their present system of war. Besides plundering and burning, another object may be to distress and injure the harvest by alarming the militia and calling them out for the protection of the Coast.

Enclosed Your Excellency will receive a copy of a Letter from Colo. Sheldon to General Heath, containing an account of a skirmish between a detachment of his Regiment and a body of the Enemy's Horse on the morning of the 2d, near Bedford, and of their destroying a meeting and two or three dwelling-Houses.[1] The main body of the Enemy at present

[1] The detachment of the enemy was commanded by Tarleton. It consisted of light dragoons and infantry, amounting, according to some accounts, to

is at and in the vicinity of Phillipsburg. At Verplanck's and Stony points they have sufficient Garrisons to occupy the works, which appear from a near view to be very strong, particularly those on the latter. I am exceedingly mortified, that the circumstances of the army in respect to numbers oblige me to a mere defensive plan, and will not suffer me to pursue such measures, as the public good may seem to require and the public expectation to demand. I hope it will be remembered, that the army has been diminished by the expiration of the term of service of a number of the troops, that it is daily lessening from the same cause, that a considerable part of our remaining force is detached upon the western expedition, and that scarcely a single man has taken the field from any of the States, except New York and Virginia, and that these are employed in other quarters. * * *

From the small exertions that have been made, I have but little hope that the Battalions will be filled, or even made respectable, tho it is a matter infinitely interesting. The business unhappily has been taken up so late by the particular States, that the levies, or recruits, who may be raised, will not be of half the

three hundred and sixty. Tarleton stated the number at about two hundred. They attacked Sheldon at Pound Ridge, where he was stationed with about ninety light-horse. A skirmish ensued, and Sheldon was compelled by a force so much superior to retreat. Being reinforced by militia, he returned to the attack, and pursued the enemy. The Americans had ten men wounded. Tarleton reported one killed and one wounded of his party. His reason for burning houses was, as he said, because the militia fired from them.—Heath's *Memoirs*, p. 208. Tarleton's *Letter*, *Remembrancer*, vol. viii., p. 365.

service that they ought. Instead of being in the Field at the opening of the Campaign, they will not join the army till towards the close, or at least, before the middle of it, and, the greater part of their time, will be in Winter-Quarters. * * * I am, &c.[1]

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.[2]

NEW WINDSOR, July 9th, 1779.

DR. SIR,

While the enemy are making excursions to distress the country, it has a very disagreeable aspect to remain in a state of inactivity on our part. The reputation of the army, and the good of the service, seem to exact some attempt from it. The importance of Stony Point to the enemy makes it infinitely desirable, that this post could be the object. The works are formidable, but perhaps on a fuller examination they may be found accessible. A deserter yesterday informed me, that there was a sandy beach on the south side, running along the flank of the works, and

[1] Read in Congress, July 13th. Referred to Marchant, Huntington, and Armstrong. Committee discharged, 13 November, 1779.

[2] On the first of July Wayne had been appointed to the command of the light infantry, and stationed between Fort Montgomery and the main army at Smith's Clove. He was instructed generally to watch the movements of the enemy and oppose any attempt against the forts. In a private instruction he was ordered to give particular attention to the garrisons at Stony Point and Verplanck's Point.

"It is a matter I have much at heart, to make some attempts upon these posts in the present weak state of the garrisons, and before the Enemy commence any other operations, if warranted by a probability of success. I must entreat your best endeavors to acquire the necessary information, and, after having obtained this, that you will give me your opinion on the practicability of a surprize of one or both those places, especially that on the West side of the River."—*Washington to Brigadier-General Wayne*, 1 July, 1779.

only obstructed by a slight *abatis*, which might afford an easy and safe approach to a body of troops.

I wish you to take every step in your power to ascertain this, and to gain a more accurate knowledge of the position in general, and particularly on the flanks and in the rear. Would it answer to send in a trusty, intelligent fellow from you in the character of a deserter, on some plan that might enable him to return with expedition? I beg you to inform yourself all you can, and to give me your opinion of the practicability of an attempt upon this post. If it is undertaken, I should conceive it ought to be done by way of surprise in the night. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

NEW WINDSOR, July 10th, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

Immediately upon receipt of Your Letter of this date, I ordered the Quartermaster-General to furnish the Espontoons you wrote for, and presume you will get them in a day or two. My ideas of the Enterprise in contemplation are these: that it should be attempted by the Light Infantry only, which should march under cover of night and with the utmost secrecy to the Enemy's lines, securing every person they find, to prevent discovery. Between one and two hundred chosen men and officers I conceive fully sufficient for the surprize; and apprehend the approach should be along the Water on the South side, crossing the Beach and entering at the *abatis*. This

party is to be preceded by a Vanguard of prudent and determined men, well commanded, who are to remove obstructions, secure the sentries, and drive in the guards. They are to advance the whole of them with fixed Bayonets and muskets unloaded. The officers commanding them are to know precisely what Batteries, or particular parts of the line, they are respectively to possess, that confusion and the consequences of indecision may be avoided. These parties should be followed by the main body at a small distance, for the purpose of support and making good the advantages which may be gained, or to bring them off in case of repulse and disappointment. Other parties may advance to the works (but not so as to be discovered till the conflict is begun) by the way of the causeway and River on the north, if practicable, as well for the purpose of distracting the Enemy in their defence, as to cut off their retreat. These parties may be small, unless the access and approaches should be very easy and safe.

The Three approaches here mentioned should be well reconnoitred beforehand, and by persons of observation. Single men in the night will be more likely to ascertain facts, than the best glasses in the day. A white feather, or cockade, or some other visible badge of distinction for the night, should be worn by our Troops, and a Watchword agreed on to distinguish friends from Foes. If success should attend the Enterprise, measures should be instantly taken to prevent, if practicable, the retreat of the garrison by water, or to annoy them as much as possible if they

attempt it; and the guns should be immediately turned against the shipping and Verplanck's point, and covered if possible from the Enemy's fire.

Secrecy is so much more essential to these kind of enterprises, than numbers, that I should not think it advisable to employ any other than the light troops. If a surprize takes place, they are fully competent to the business; if it does not, numbers will avail little. As it is in the power of a single Deserter to betray the design, defeat the project, and involve the party in difficulties and danger, too much caution cannot be used to conceal the intended enterprise till the latest hour from all but the principal officers of your corps, and from the men till the moment of execution. A knowledge of your intention, ten minutes previously obtained, will blast all your hopes; for which reason a small detachment, composed of men whose fidelity you can rely on, under the care of a Judicious Officer, should guard every avenue through the marsh to the Enemy's works, by which our Deserters or the spies can pass, and prevent all intercourse. The usual time for exploits of this kind is a little before day, for which reason a vigilant officer is then more on the watch. I therefore recommend a midnight hour. I had in view to attempt Verplanck's point at the same instant, that your operations should commence at Stony Point; but the incertainty of coöperating in point of time, and the hazard which would be thereby run of defeating the attempt on Stony point, which is infinitely more important, (the other being dependent,) has induced me to suspend that operation.

These are my general ideas of the plan for a surprize; but you are at liberty to depart from them in every instance, where you may think they may be improved, or changed for the better. A Dark night, and even a rainy one, (if you can find the way,) will contribute to your success. The officers, in these night marches, should be extremely attentive to keep their men together, as well for the purpose of guarding against desertion to the enemy, as to prevent skulking. As it is a part of the plan, if the surprize should succeed, to make use of the enemy's Cannon against their shipping and their post on the other side, it will be well to have a small detachment of artillery with you to serve them. I have sent an order to the park for this purpose, and, to cover the design, have ordered down a couple of light field-pieces. When you march, you can leave the pieces behind. So soon as you have fixed your plan and the time of execution, I shall be obliged to you to give me notice. I shall immediately order you a reinforcement of light Infantry and Espontoons.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
12 July, 1779.

DR. SIR,

I am just honored with your letter of the 10th. Mine of this morning, which will probably reach you before this, will inform you that on hearing of the enemy's movement from below, I had detached a

body of troops under Major-General Heath to counteract them.[1] It gives me pain, that I have it not in my power to afford more effectual succor to the country; but the smallness of our force obliges me to confine my attention so entirely to one essential point, that I can do little more than lament the depredations of the enemy at a distance. I am persuaded your Excellency will make every allowance for the incompetency of the means put into my hands. The security of the communication of this river is of so great importance, and the enemy have such a facility, by the assistance of water transportation, of moving from one place to another, that we dare not withdraw any considerable part of our force from this post, but with an embarrassing degree of caution. It is very probable in the present case, that one princi-

[1] This expedition was under the command of Generals Tryon and Garth. It landed near New Haven on the 5th, in two divisions, and entering the town, gave themselves over to plunder, burning stores, vessels, and dwelling-houses, The marauders were driven back to their ships, but two days later Fairfield was treated in the same manner, chiefly by the Hessians, and later Green Farms and Norwalk suffered at their hands. In a proclamation Tryon said: "The existence of a single habitation on your defenceless coast ought to be a constant reproof to your ingratitude."

In reply to Sir Henry Clinton's despatch, giving an account of these transactions, the minister said: "The expedition into Connecticut, upon which you detached Major-General Tryon, was ably planned and well executed; and you will acquaint Major-General Tryon and the officers that were under his care, that their conduct has met with his Majesty's approbation; but I cannot help lamenting with you, that the behaviour of the rebels, in firing from their houses upon the troops, rendered it necessary to make use of severities, that are ever painful to British soldiers to inflict, but that were such as are justified by the rules of war, and by the general practice of all nations upon such occasions. And in the present instance it was not only a chastisement, which the rebels justly deserved, but it appears to have been a measure also necessary for the safety and security of his Majesty's forces employed upon the occasion."—*Lord George Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton*, November 4th.

pal object of the operations on your coast may be to draw us off from the River, to facilitate an attack upon it. The movement towards Horseneck has more particularly this aspect. It is however very likely, that the detachment under Tryon may go on with its ravages on your coast, to disturb the inhabitants in the occupations of harvest, by which they no doubt do us very serious injury. I believe the accounts you have received rather overrate his force. From my best information, it consists of Six Regiments, the four that came from Rhode Island and two others, one Regiment of Anspach, Fanning's, 7th, 22d, 23d, and 54th British. These cannot exceed, hardly equal, two thousand.

I thank your Excellency for the proclamation and answer.[1] The first is truly ridiculous and must tend to incense rather than intimidate; the last is laconic, but to the purpose. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

HEAD-QRS., NEW WINDSOR, July 14, 1779.

DR. SIR,

I have reflected on the advantages and disadvantages of delaying the proposed attempt, and I do not know but the latter preponderate. You may therefore carry it into execution to-morrow night, as you desire, unless some new motive or better information should induce you to think it best to

[1] The proclamation sent abroad by General Tryon and Sir George Collier, when they invaded Connecticut; and Colonel Whiting's answer.—See *Remembrancer*, vol ix., p. 373.

defer it. You are at liberty to choose between the different plans on which we have conversed. But as it is important to have every information we can procure, if you could manage in the mean time to see Major Lee, it may be useful. He has been so long near the spot, and has taken so much pains to inform himself critically concerning the post, that I imagine he may be able to make you acquainted with some further details. Your interview must be managed with caution, or it may possibly raise suspicion.[1] I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
July 21st, 1779.

SIR,

On the 16th instant I had the honor to inform Congress of a successful attack upon the enemy's post at Stony Point, on the preceding night, by Brigadier-General Wayne and the corps of light infantry under

[1] Major Henry Lee, with his light dragoons and Captain Allen McLane's company, was stationed at Haverstraw, for the purpose of gaining intelligence and watching the movements of the enemy. On the 15th Washington ordered Brigadier-General Muhlenberg to put his brigade in motion about midnight, marching secretly and perfectly light, with one day's provision, towards Stony Point, as Wayne had gone to that place "to take a view of the enemy, and, if an opportunity offers, to attempt something serious." At half-past nine on the morning of the 16th the following laconic note was received by Washington from Wayne:

"STONY POINT, two o'clock, A.M., 16 July, 1779.

"DEAR GENERAL,

"The fort and garrison, with Colonel Johnson, are ours. Our officers and men behaved like men who are determined to be free.

"Yours, most sincerely,

"ANTHONY WAYNE."

his command. The ulterior operations, in which we have been engaged, have hitherto put it out of my power to transmit the particulars of this interesting event. They will now be found in the enclosed report, which I have received from General Wayne. To the encomiums he has deservedly bestowed on the officers and men under his command, it gives me pleasure to add, that his own conduct throughout the whole of this arduous enterprise merits the warmest approbation of Congress. He improved upon the plan recommended by me, and executed it in a manner that does signal honor to his judgment and to his bravery. In a critical moment of the assault, he received a flesh-wound in the head with a musket-ball, but continued leading on his men with unshaken firmness.

I now beg leave for the private satisfaction of Congress, to explain the motives which induced me to direct the attempt. In my further letters I have pointed out the advantages, which the enemy derived from the possession of this post and the one on the opposite side, and the inconveniences resulting from it to us. To deprive them of the former, and remove the latter, were sufficient inducements to endeavor to dispossess them. The necessity of doing something to satisfy the expectations of the people, and reconcile them to the defensive plan we are obliged to pursue, and to the apparent inactivity which our situation imposes upon us; the value of the acquisition in itself, with respect to the men, artillery, and stores, which composed the garrison; the effect it would

have upon the successive operations of the campaign, and the check it would give to the depredations of the enemy at the present season; all these motives concurred to determine me to the undertaking. The certain advantages of success, even if not so extensive as might be wished, would, at all events, be very important; the probable disadvantages of a failure were comparatively inconsiderable, and, on the plan that was adopted, could amount to little more than the loss of a small number of men.

After reconnoitring the post myself, and collecting all the information I could get of its strength and situation, I found, that, without hazarding a greater loss than we were able to afford, and with less likelihood of success, the attempt to carry it could only be by way of surprise. I therefore resolved on this mode, and gave my instructions accordingly, as contained in No. 2, in hopes that Verplanck's point might fall in consequence of the reduction of the other. Dispositions were made for the purpose, which unluckily did not succeed. The evening appointed for the attack, I directed Major-General McDougall to put two Brigades under marching orders to be moved down towards Verplanck's as soon as he should receive intelligence of the success of the attempt on this side, and requested General Wayne to let his despatches to me pass through General McDougall, that he might have the earliest advice of the event. But through some misconception, they came directly on to Head-Quarters, which occasioned a loss of several hours. The next morning, Major-General Howe was sent to take

the command of those troops, with orders to advance to the vicinity of the enemy's works, and open batteries against them. It was hoped that this might either awe them into a surrender under the impression of what had happened on the other side, or prepare the way for an assault. But some accidental delays, in bringing on the heavy cannon and trenching tools necessary for an operation of this kind, unavoidably retarded its execution, till the approach of the enemy's main body made it too late. General Howe, to avoid being intercepted, found himself under a necessity of relinquishing his project and retiring to a place of security. I did not unite the two attacks at the same time and in the same manner, because this would have rendered the enterprise more complex, more liable to suspicion, and less likely success, for want of an exact coöperation, which could hardly have been expected.[1]

When I came to examine the post at Stony point, I found it would require more men to maintain it, than we could afford, without incapacitating the army for other operations. In the opinion of the engineer, corresponding with my own and that of all the general officers present, not less than 1500 men would be requisite for its complete defence; and, from the nature of the works, which were open towards the River, a great deal of labor and expense must have been incurred, and much time employed, to make

[1] "I have it from good authority that his Excellency fully expected General Howe would have made the attack, for which purpose he waited a whole day at Stony Point, not only to see the business commence, but also to favor it by a cannonade across the river, by which the enemy were actually drove to the rear of their works."—*General Irvine to President Reed*, 23 July, 1779.

them defensible by us. The enemy depending on their shipping to protect the rear, had constructed the works solely against an attack by land. We should have had to apprehend equally an attack by water, and must have enclosed the post. While we were doing this, the whole army must have been in the vicinity, exposed to the risk of a general action on terms, which it would not be our interest to court, and out of reach to assist in carrying on the fortifications at West Point, or to support them in case of necessity. These considerations made it an unanimous sentiment to evacuate the post, remove the cannon and stores, and destroy the works, which was accomplished on the night of the 18th, one piece of heavy cannon only excepted. For want of proper tackling within reach to transport the cannon by land, we were obliged to send them to the fort by water. The movements of the enemy's vessels created some uneasiness on their account, and induced me to keep one of the pieces for their protection, which finally could not be brought off without risking more for its preservation than it was worth. We also lost a galley, which was ordered down to cover the boats. She got under way on her return the afternoon of the 18th. The enemy began a severe and continued cannonade upon her, from which having received some injury, which disabled her for proceeding, she was run ashore. Not being able to get her afloat till late in the flood tide, and one or two of the enemy's vessels under favor of the night passed above her, she was set on fire and blown up.

Disappointed in our attempt on the other side, we may lose some of the principal advantages hoped for from the undertaking. The enemy may reëstablish the post at Stony point, and still continue to interrupt that communication. Had both places been carried, though we should not have been able to occupy them ourselves, there is great reason to believe the enemy would hardly have mutilated their main body a second time, and gone through the same trouble to regain possession of posts where they had been so unfortunate. But though we may not reap all the benefits, which might have followed, those we do reap are very important. The diminution of their force, by the loss of so many men, will be felt in their present circumstances. The artillery and stores will be a valuable acquisition to us, especially in our scarcity of heavy cannon for the forts. The event will have a good effect upon the minds of the people, give our troops greater confidence in themselves, and depress the spirits of the enemy proportionably. If they resolve to reëstablish the post, they must keep their force collected for the purpose. This will serve to confine their ravages within a narrower compass, and to a part of the country already exhausted. They must lose part of the remainder of the campaign in rebuilding the works; and, when they have left a garrison for its defence, their main body, by being lessened, must act with so much the less energy, and so much the greater caution.

They have now brought their whole force up the River, and yesterday landed a body at Stony Point.

It is supposed not impossible, that General Clinton may endeavor to retaliate by a stroke upon West Point; and his having stripped New York as bare as possible, and brought up a number of small boats, are circumstances that give a color to the surmise. Though all this may very well be resolved into different motives, prudence requires that our dispositions should have immediate reference to the security of this post; and I have therefore drawn our force together, so as that the whole may act in its defence on an emergency. To-morrow I remove my own quarters to the fort.

It is probable Congress will be pleased to bestow some marks of consideration upon those officers, who distinguished themselves upon this occasion. Every officer and man of the corps deserves great credit; but there were particular ones, whose situation placed them foremost in danger, and made their conduct most conspicuous. Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury [1] and Major Stewart commanded the two attacks. Lieutenants Gibbons and Knox [2] commanded the advanced parties, or *forlorn hopes;* and all acquitted themselves as well as it was possible. These officers have a claim to be more particularly noticed. In any other service promotion would be the proper reward, but in

[1] "In the late assault on Stony Point he commanded one of the attacks, was the first that entered the enemy's works, and struck the British flag with his own hands, as reported by General Wayne."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 25 July, 1779. Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury was applying for a furlough of a few months desiring to return to France "on some matters interesting to himself."

[2] Lieutenant James Gibbons belonged to the 6th, and Lieutenant Knox to the 9th Pennsylvania regiment.

ours it would be injurious. I take the liberty to recommend in preference some honorary present, especially to the field-officers. A brevet captaincy to the other two, as it will have no operation in regimental rank, may not be amiss.

Congress will perceive, that some pecuniary rewards were promised by General Wayne to his corps. This was done with my concurrence; and in addition to them, as a greater incitement to their exertions, they were also promised the benefit of whatever was taken in the fort. The artillery and stores are converted to the use of the public; but, in compliance with my engagements, it will be necessary to have them appraised, and the amount paid to the captors in money. I hope my conduct in this instance will not be disapproved. Mr. Archer,[1] who will have the honor of delivering these despatches, is a volunteer Aid to General Wayne, and a gentleman of merit. His zeal, activity, and spirit are conspicuous upon every occasion. I am, &c.

P. S. Congress may possibly be at a loss what to do with Mr. Archer. A captain's brevet, or commission in the army at large, will be equal to his wishes; and he deserves encouragement on every account. Lest there should be any misapprehension, as to what is mentioned about the manner of sending despatches through General McDougall, I beg leave to be more explicit. I directed General Wayne, when he marched of his ground, to send his despatches in the first in-

[1] Henry W. Archer.

stance to the officer of his baggage-guard, left at the encampment from which he marched, who was to inform his messenger where I was to be found. I left word with this officer to forward the Messenger to General McDougall, and I desired General McDougall to open the despatches. The Messenger, who was Capt. Fishbourn, came directly on, either through misconception in General Wayne, in the officer of the guard, or in himself.

I forgot to mention that two flags and two standards were taken, the former belonging to the garrison, and the latter to the seventeenth regiment. These shall be sent to Congress by the first convenient opportunity.[1]

TO JOSEPH REED.

WEST POINT, July 29, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

I have a pleasure in acknowledging the receipt of your obliging favor of the 15th inst., and in finding by it, that the author of the *Queries*, "*Political and Military*,"[2] has had no great cause to exult in the

[1] "General Washington established his head-quarters at West Point on the 21st of July, and remained there till December, when the army went into winter-quarters. It was during this period, that the strong works at West Point and its vicinity were chiefly constructed. Part of the time, two thousand five hundred men were daily on fatigue duty. The right wing of the army, consisting of the Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia troops, was commanded by General Putnam; the left wing, composed of the Connecticut brigades and some of the Massachusetts regiments, was under General Heath, and posted in the Highlands on the east side of the river. The centre, or garrison at West Point, was under the immediate command of General McDougall.

[2] These *Queries* were written by General Charles Lee, and after rejection by the Philadelphia papers, were printed anonymously in the *Maryland Journal*, a paper published by William Goddard, a friend of General Lee.

favorable reception of them by the public. Without a clue, I should have been at no loss to trace the malevolent writer; but I have seen a history of the transaction, and felt a pleasure mingled with pain at the narration. To stand well in the estimation of one's country is a happiness, that no rational creature

Query 9th. "Whether it is salutary or dangerous, consistent with or abhorrent from the spirit and principles of liberty and republicanism, to inculcate and encourage in the people an idea, that their welfare, safety, and glory depend on one man? Whether they really do depend on one man?"

10th. "Whether amongst the late warm, or rather loyal addresses of this city [Philadelphia] to his Excellency General Washington, there was a single mortal, one gentleman only excepted, who could possibly be acquainted with his merits?

"Whether the gentleman excepted does really think his Excellency a great man, or whether evidences could not be produced of his thinking quite the reverse?

"Whether the armies under Gates and Arnold, and the detachment under Stark to the northward, or that immediately under his Excellency in Pennsylvania, gave the decisive turn to the fortune of war?"

There were twenty-five queries of a similar tenor and bearing. The "gentleman" here referred to was President Reed, who wrote to Washington, when he forwarded to him a copy of the *Queries*: "I should not have troubled you with the enclosed paper, if I did not know that you can look down with contempt on these feeble efforts of malevolence and resentment, and that I am introduced into it to bear false witness. I have addressed a piece to the printer, wherein I have made such remarks and taken such a notice of this attempt, as I thought a respect to my own character required. I have also the pleasure of assuring you, that the performance has met with the most general detestation and resentment, involving the printer and all concerned in a most disagreeable dilemma. This is so true a criterion of the sense of the public, that I cannot help congratulating you on this genuine mark of public affection."—*MS. Letter*, July 15th.

Much indignation was expressed against Goddard when the *Queries* appeared in his paper. A large number of the most respectable citizens of Baltimore withdrew their patronage from the *Maryland Journal*, publicly avowing as a reason, that they considered it subservient to the interests of the enemy. Mr. Goddard published a recantation, in which he acknowledged, that he had "transgressed against truth, justice, and his duty as a good citizen," in giving currency to the *Queries*, and at the same time declared the author of them to be General Lee."—*Sparks*.

can be insensible of. To be pursued, first under the mask of friendship, and, when disguise would suit no longer, as an open calumniator, with gross misrepresentation and *self-known* falsehoods, carries an alloy, which no temper can bear with perfect composure.

The motives, which actuate this gentleman, are better understood by himself than me. If he can produce a single instance, in which I have mentioned his name, after his tryal commenced, where it was in my power to avoid it, and, when it was not, where I have done it with the smallest degree of acrimony or disrespect, I will consent that the world shall view my character in as disreputable a light, as he wishes to place it. What cause, then, there is for such a profusion of venom, as he is emitting upon all occasions, unless by an act of public duty, in bringing him to tryal at his own solicitation, I have disappointed him and raised his ire; or, conceiving that, in proportion as he can darken the shades of my character, he illuminates his own;—whether these, I say, or motives yet more dark and hidden, govern him, I shall not undertake to decide; nor have I time to inquire into them at present.

If I had ever assumed the character of a military genius and the officer of experience; if, under these false colors, I had solicited the command I was honored with; or if, after my appointment, I had presumptuously driven on, under the sole guidance of my own judgment and self-will, and misfortunes, the result of obstinacy and misconduct, not of necessity, had followed, I should have thought myself a proper

object for the lash, not only of his, but of the pen of every other writer, and a fit subject for public resentment. But when it is well known that the command was in a manner forced upon me, that I accepted it with the utmost diffidence, from a consciousness that it required greater abilities and more experience than I possessed, to conduct a great military machine, embarrassed as I knew ours must be by a variety of complex circumstances, and as it were but little better than a mere chaos; and when nothing more was promised on my part, than has been most inviolably performed; it is rather grating to pass over in silence charges, which may impress the uninformed, tho others know, that these charges have neither reason nor truth to support them, and that a simple narrative of facts would defeat all his assertions, notwithstanding they are made with an effrontery, which few men do, and, for the honor of human nature, none ought to possess.

If this gentleman is envious of my station, and conceives I stand in his way to preferment, I can assure him, in most solemn terms, that the first wish of my soul is to return to that peaceful retirement, and domestick ease and happiness, from whence I came. To this end all my labors have been directed, and for this purpose have I been more than four years a perfect slave, endeavoring, under as many embarrassing circumstances as ever fell to one man's lot to encounter, and as pure motives as ever man was influenced by, to promote the cause and service I had embarked in.